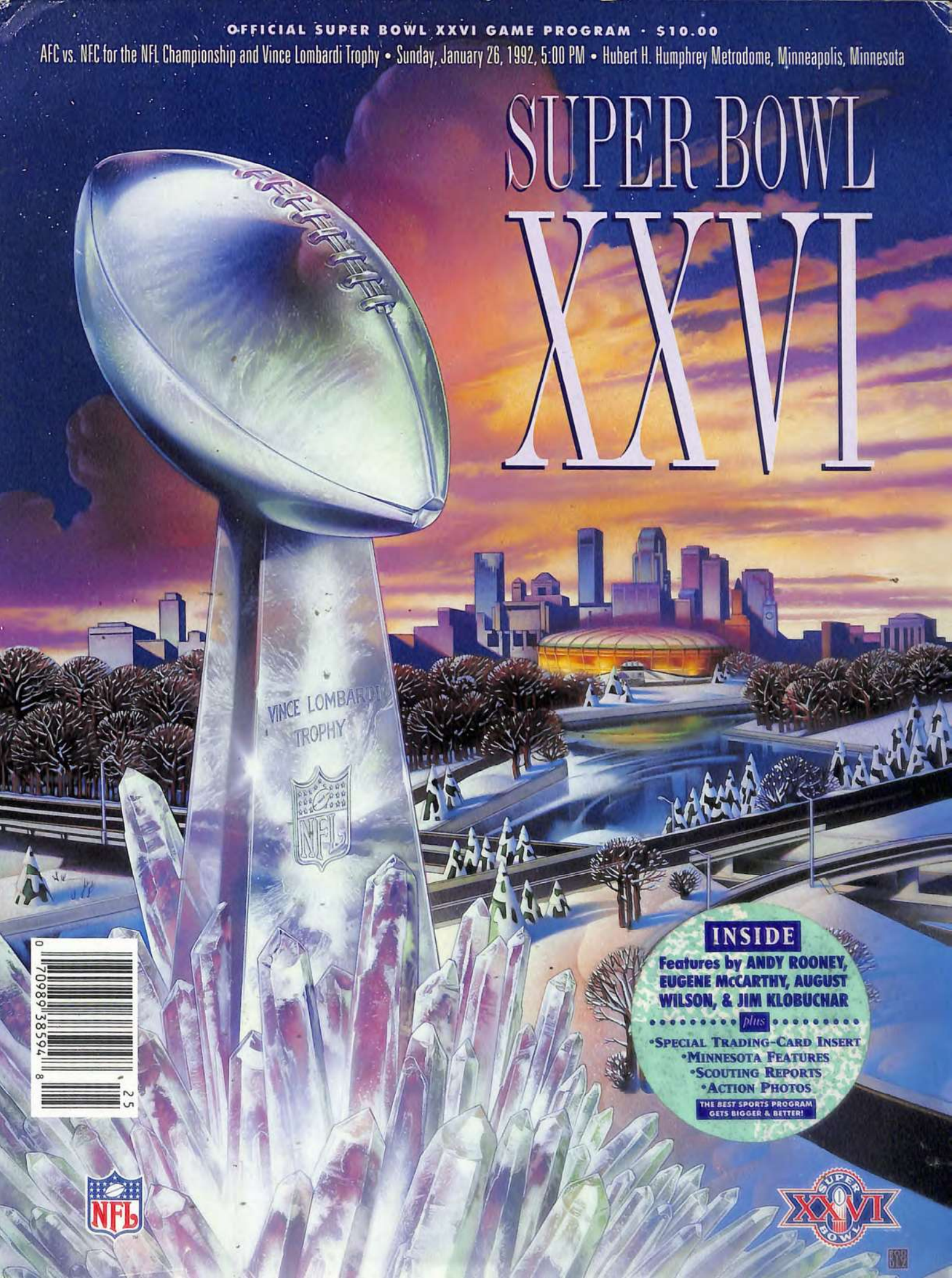
OFFICIAL SUPER BOWL XXVI GAME PROGRAM · $10.00

AFC vs. NFC for the NFL Championship and Vince Lombardi Trophy • Sunday, January 26, 1992, 5:00 PM • Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, Minneapolis, Minnesota

SUPER BOWL XXVI



INSIDE

Features by ANDY ROONEY, EUGENE McCARTHY, AUGUST WILSON, & JIM KLOBUCHAR

plus

- SPECIAL TRADING-CARD INSERT
- MINNESOTA FEATURES
- SCOUTING REPORTS
- ACTION PHOTOS

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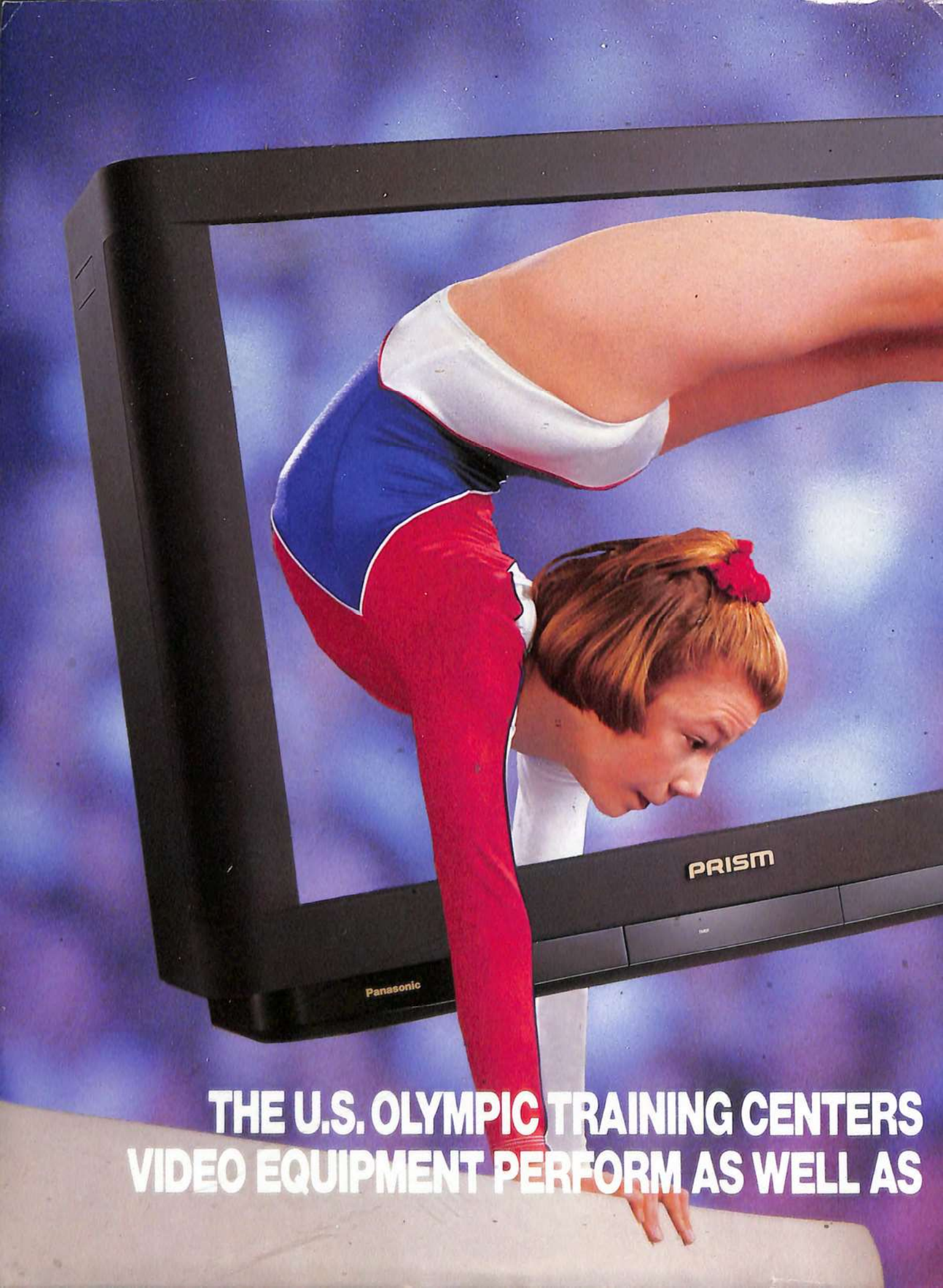

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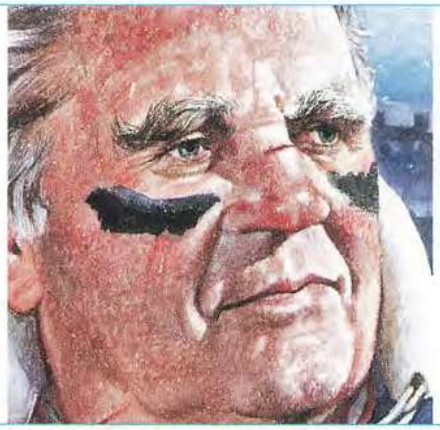

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HOT INFO

Kickoff Time: 5 P.M. (CST) Teams: AFC champion vs. NFC champion for the National Football League Championship and the Vince Lombardi Trophy. The AFC champion will be the home team and will have the choice of wearing white or colored jerseys.

Players' Shares: Each member of the winning team receives $36,000; each member of the losing team receives $18,000—a total of more than $2.6 million for the personnel of the competing clubs.

Medical Assistance

First-aid teams are stationed throughout the stadium, with team members in green vests for easy identification. The first-aid station is located on LL1, room 117. Should you, or anyone near you, need medical assistance, please contact security, an usher, or concession personnel. If possible, please provide personnel with the location of the patron and the nature of the problem.

Overtime: If Super Bowl XXVI is tied at the end of the regulation 60 minutes, it will continue into sudden-death overtime. The team scoring first—by safety, field goal, or touchdown—will win. The Super Bowl will continue by 15-minute periods, with two-minute intermissions, until there is a winner.

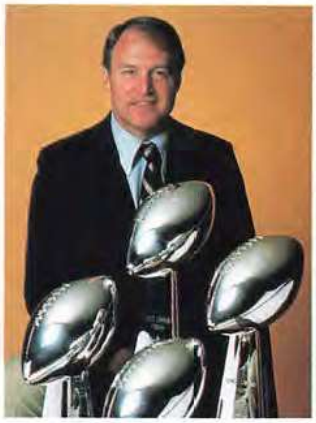
Television Coverage: CBS will begin its pregame show at 3:30 P.M. (CST). The game telecast starts at 5 P.M.

Radio Coverage: CBS Radio's broadcast will begin at 4:45 (CST).

A Youthful Pregame Show

Today's pregame show, "Twin Cities Youth on Review," highlights the up-and-coming young stars of the Minneapolis area. Opening the show will be the popular Minnesota jazz group, Moore by Four, which will perform two songs from *The Wiz*—"Ease on Down the Road" and "Everybody Rejoice." Next, 300 fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders from Twin Cities schools will back up 11-year-old Melissa Muench of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, who will sing two songs—"Tomorrow" and "Hard Knock Life"—from the musical *Annie*. The combined bands from Anoka, Blaine, and Eden Prairie High Schools, along with 200 flag-team members and 20 state award-winning baton twirlers, then will follow with "76 Trombones" from *The Music Man*. For the finale, the Metropolitan Boys Choir and the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies will join the entire cast in "One" from *A Chorus Line*.

John Zimmerman



Recently retired Pittsburgh head coach Chuck Noll, representing the Steelers' four Super Bowl champion teams, will flip the coin prior to today's game.

The focus will remain on youth when the National Anthem is performed by vocalist, pianist, and songwriter Harry Connick, Jr. Though just 24 years old, Connick's professional career dates back 15 years to his childhood in New Orleans. His current best-selling album, "Blue Light, Red Light" on Columbia Records, follows a year that saw him receive two Grammy Awards and nominations for an Emmy, a Golden Globe, and an Oscar. Participating in the National Anthem ceremony with Connick will be the Veterans of World War II to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of U.S. entry into that war.

The pregame show is the eighth produced and directed by Bob Best. The associate producer is Ed Jones, the choreographer Lesslee Fitzmorris, the musical director Hilton Jones, the cast coordinator Mary Ann Dallas.

One final note: After today's game the presentation of the Vince Lombardi trophy in the winning team's locker room and player interviews will be shown live on the stadium screens.

Local favorites Moore By Four (above) and Melissa Meunch (right) perform in the pregame show. Multi-talented Harry Connick, Jr. (below) will sing the National Anthem.

The Snow Must Go On

Few metropolitan areas know how to enjoy winter as much as Minneapolis-St. Paul. And today's halftime reflects that positive winter attitude with style. "Winter Magic," a kaleidoscopic salute to the fun and fantasy of the winter season, features a cast and crew of nearly 1,500, plus former Olympic ice skating champions Dorothy Hamill and Brian Boitano, with a special appearance by international superstar Gloria Estefan. Fans attending the game also will participate in the show via two card-stunt routines. (Information and cards are in seat-cushion pouches).

The show consists of four acts and will flow among three stages on the field. Act I opens with a 30-second overture by the 60-piece Minnesota Youth Symphonies, followed onto the field by a 35-piece snowflake drill team, a 150-piece fabric drill team, and 60 dancers, combining to create the effect of swirling snowflakes. The up-tempo "Winter Magic" opening segues into "Winter Wonderland," accompanied by 40 ballroom dancers, 30 costumed showgirls, and 60 other dancers. The action then shifts to a dance routine performed to an excerpt from Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite," which includes ballet dancers, male and female gymnasts, and fireworks.

Figure skaters Dorothy Hamill and Brian Boitano (above) and international pop star Gloria Estefan (below) headline today's halftime show.

Act II brings a giant silk "Frosty the Snowman," flanked by two, 30-foot inflatable snowmen, a 400-member drill team, and the University of Minnesota marching band. A medley of "snow" tunes will be

Palma Kolansky

played, and the field will be flooded with 100 young, hip-hop kids dancing the "Frosty Rap" as Team Rollerblade skates to the music.

A 1992 Olympic Games fanfare signals the opening of Act III, a salute to the upcoming Winter Olympics at Albertville, France. As a drill team forms the five Olympic rings, Hamill and Boitano skate to "One Moment in Time," joined by 75 rollerblade performers choreographed as figure skaters. Then, 1,000 cast members return to the field, representing various Winter Olympic sports.

Featured guest performer Estefan heats up the proceedings in Act IV, in direct opposition to a 50-foot, Mr. North Wind character. Estefan's latest album, "Into the Light," which was released in early 1991, produced three Top-Ten hits. Her sold-out "Into the Light" world tour continues to Mexico, Puerto Rico, and South and Central America after the Super Bowl. As Estefan's scorching Latin rhythms fade, the entire cast re-enters for the closing number, accompanied by lights, snowflakes, pyrotechnics, and helium balloons.

In its first Super Bowl halftime, Timberline Productions is coordinating all aspects of the show. The firm was founded 12 years ago by president and managing partner Roger Pearsall, who with partner and executive vice-president Mike Heyl, head a group experienced with Disney Entertainment and Marriott theme parks and hotels. Pearsall and Heyl are the co-executive producers of today's halftime show. Steve Carroll, vice president/creative director of Timberline, is the producer, and Marilyn Magness is the director.

Halftime Credits

Timberline Productions
President: Roger Pearsall
Executive Vice President: Mike Heyl
Producer: Steve Carroll
Director: Marilyn Magness
Musical Director: Don Harper
Costume Designer: Garland Riddle
Staging Director: Judy Chabola
Choreographer: Doug Jack
Assistant to the Producer: Rita MacDermott
Celebrity Coordinator: Mindy Dow
Sound Design: Larry Estrin
Assistant Technical Director: Paul Liszewski
Assistant Choreographer: Scott Grossman
Stage Manager: Simma Gershenson
Operations Manager: Kathy Erickson
Staging Assistants: Marvette Knight, Matt Meko, Kristen Patterson, Molly Vasterling
Associate Producers: **VEE Corporation,** Minneapolis, MN
Art Director: Jim Waters
Production Manager: Barbara Lutz
Technical Director: Jack Pance
Balloons: Balloon Art by Treb
Pyrotechnics: Classic Fireworks
Special Thanks to Minnesota Youth Symphonies, University of Minnesota Marching Band, and Team Rollerblade.

A Veteran Team

CBS Sports is fielding a broadcast team with an abundance of Super Bowl experience to cover today's game. Analyst John Madden, doing his fifth Super Bowl telecast, and play-by-play man Pat Summerall (thirteenth) will be in the broadcast booth. Behind the scenes will be producer Bob Stenner (sixth), director Sandy Grossman (seventh), and CBS Sports' executive producer Ted Shaker (seventh).

The Super Bowl telecast will begin at 6 P.M. (EST). It will be preceded by a special 2½-hour edition of "The NFL Today" entitled "The Super Bowl Today." The NFL Today team features Greg Gumbel, Pat O'Brien, Leslie Visser, and a man with four Super Bowl rings worth of experience, Hall of Fame quarterback Terry Bradshaw. The Super Bowl Today telecast will be produced by Eric Mann and directed by Duke Struck. The senior producer for CBS Sports is Ed Goren.

Super Bowl XXV (between the Bills and the Giants) was seen by 112 million viewers in the United States. This year's CBS Sports broadcast of Super Bowl XXVI will be seen live throughout the U.S. as well as live and on videotape in more than 50 foreign locations and U.S. military installations.

CBS Sports

CBS Radio Sports

CBS's Super Bowl XXVI telecast features the announcing team of Pat Summerall and John Madden (above). Hank Stram and Jack Buck (right) are in the booth for the CBS Radio broadcast.

Super Tradition

CBS Radio Sports continues its tradition of providing exclusive network radio coverage of postseason games with this year's Super Bowl XXVI broadcast, which begins at 5:45 P.M. (EST). Jack Buck and Hank Stram again will bring every play of the game to nearly 14 million listeners, as they have for all but two years since 1978. Joining Buck and Stram for the pregame and halftime segments will be Emmy Award-winning sportscasters Greg Gumbel and John Madden. The broadcast will be carried by stations in 315 U.S. markets and more than 400 Armed Forces Radio Network outlets worldwide.

Spanish-speaking audiences in the U.S. and Latin America once again will be able to enjoy live coverage of the Super Bowl through affiliates of the CBS Hispanic Radio Network. For the second year, an NFL package, consisting of five postseason games and the special series "The Road to the Super Bowl," is being broadcast to an estimated 25 million listeners. Longtime voices of the Miami Dolphins and Dallas Cowboys, Rene Giraldo and Armando Quintero, will anchor the broadcast, joined by Minnesota Vikings kicker Fuad Reveiz.

Saturday Night Date

'Twas the night before Super Bowl and fans in the know were getting primed for Super Sunday by watching the show—"Super Bowl Saturday Night," a 90-minute entertainment/NFL awards television special live on TNT (7-8:30 P.M. CST). This first-ever event honoring NFL stars was hosted by Burt Reynolds, and featured a full roster of celebrity presenters and performers, who converged on the Target Center, a state-of-the-art 17,000-seat arena in downtown Minneapolis. The show, which was staged by Radio City Music Hall Productions and producer/director Walter Miller of Grammy Awards show fame, included presentations of awards for NFL Man of the Year, Miller Lite NFL Player of the Year, NFL Pro Set Rookie of the Year, NFL Lifetime Achievement, as well as presentation of the 1992 Pro Football Hall of Fame Inductees Tribute. A percentage of the ticket revenue was donated to charity.

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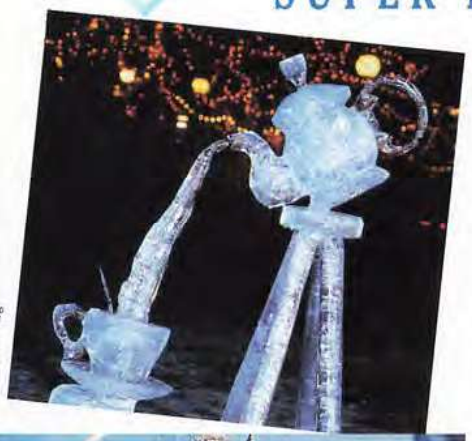

Tim Steinberg

Al Messerschmidt

There is never a shortage of ice at the St. Paul Winter Carnival (above) for sculpting, sliding, skating, fishing, and even softball. This gala winter festival is the nation's oldest celebration of winter .

The Great Minnesota Warm-Up

The nation's oldest celebration of winter expanded to include the Super Bowl this year. Beginning Friday, January 17, and running through Super Sunday, the St. Paul Winter Carnival has offered local residents and out-of-town guests a blizzard of winter activities. The attractions included a 750-foot long Super Ice Slide, ice- and snow-carving contests, ski jumping, ice skating, ice fishing, sleigh rides, softball on ice, sled-dog races, and the massive 150-foot-tall Ice Castle. The foundation for the Ice Castle was laid in October. The spectacular 15-story structure consists of 30,000 blocks of ice, each weighing 500 pounds. It was unveiled Wednesday night on Harriet Island.

Super Bowl host city Minneapolis added to the "Great Minnesota Warm-Up" excitement with its 10-day "Party Under Glass," which filled the downtown area's indoor Skyway system with music and entertainment.

And be sure to look skyward after today's game. To cap the festivities, Super Bowl fans will be treated to postgame fireworks over the Metrodome, sponsored by Medtronic and the Minnesota Super Bowl XXVI Task Force.

Are You NFL Experienced?

Just when you thought that the Super Bowl couldn't get any more super, along came "The NFL Experience" on Friday, January 24, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Aside from the game, The NFL Experience is the biggest event of Super Bowl weekend, with more than 32 exhibits, interactive games, and NFL attractions. Fans attending the "NFL Theme Park" can get a feel for the NFL with opportunities to kick an extra point, throw the winning touchdown pass, meet NFL stars, see rare NFL memorabilia, and live a day in the life of an NFL player through NFL Films' newest feature. Produced by NFL Properties, the NFL's marketing, licensing, and publishing division, The NFL Experience is sponsored by American Express, with more than 20 additional NFL sponsors providing support, products, and services. Plans call for The NFL Experience to be on display at Super Bowls XXVII in Los Angeles and XXVIII in Atlanta.

Tickets for The NFL Experience are sold for three-hour time periods and are available through TICKETMASTER (for a small service charge) in Minneapolis (612-989-5151). Ticket prices are: Adults 13 years and older, $12 in advance ($14 at the door); children 2 to 12 years, $5 ($6 at the door); Infants under 2 years, free; seniors over 65 years, $5 ($6 at the door); family package (2 adults and 3 children), $29 ($36 at the door); group tickets (25 or more adults), $10, (25 or more children), $5.

The event's hours of operation are: Friday (1/24) 9 A.M.- 6 P.M.; Saturday (1/25) 10 A.M.-10 P.M.; Sunday (1/26) 9 A.M.-12 midnight; and Monday (1/27) 9 A.M.-6 P.M.

Attractions at The NFL Experience will include:

NFL Quarterback Challenge—Fans have the opportunity to throw regulation game balls against a sensor-driven target in a re-creation of the "NFL Quarterback Challenge," an NBC Sports TV event won by Miami's Dan Marino last year.

NFL's Fastest Man—Fans, competing six at a time, race against an advancing path of flashing lights that simulate the speed of Redskins Pro Bowl cornerback Darrell Green, the winner of the "DHL/NFL's Fastest Man" competition on NBC's SportsWorld, in a 60-yard dash.

Paul Spinelli/ NFL Photos

At The NFL Experience, fans can test their speed against that of Washington's Darrell Green, (above, left) winner of the NFL's Fastest Man event .

Extra Point Kick—An opportunity to kick a regulation football through actual goal-post uprights. A pre-qualification kick will separate the rookies from the pros.

Wilson Football Factory—A demonstration of how official NFL game balls are produced. Skilled Wilson employees will create limited-edition footballs on site, emblazoned with The NFL Experience logo.

Riddell Testing Center—Physical demonstrations of the durability and strength of the protective equipment worn by NFL players.

Foot Locker Team Shop

Foot Locker, America's largest athletic footwear and apparel retailer, has erected an 18,000 square foot NFL Team Shop. This spectacular sports store offers an array of official merchandise from all 28 NFL teams as well as Super Bowl specialty items. Team Shop entry is included in The NFL Experience admission.

Super Bowl Card Show III

Trading card enthusiasts are heading for Super Bowl Card Show III, which is packed with dealers, memorabilia, and collectors. Plus, NFL players will be available to sign free autographs. Sponsored by Action Packed, Impel, Pro Set, Fleer, Pacific, Score, Upper Deck, and Wild Card, admission is free as part of your NFL Experience ticket.

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An NFL fan's dream bookstore becomes a reality inside The NFL Experience! B. Dalton and the NFL team up to provide a super selection of NFL books, posters, and NFL Films videos. Included in the offerings will be the *Official NFL Pro Set Card Book* from Workman Publishing, *The Super Bowl* from Simon & Schuster, and *War of the Words, 25 Years of Super Bowl Head Butts and High Fives: War of the Words*, published by Bobbleheads Press of Minneapolis and compiled and edited by Wes Janz and Vickie Abrahamson with an introduction by former NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle, is a comprehensive collection of Super Bowl quotes. *Sports Illustrated for Kids* magazine also will present an animated interactive video display designed to teach the basics of football.

NFL Experience Main Stage—Continuous live entertainment, including hourly dance performances, celebrity and player appearances, a "You Make the Call" participatory game with NFL officials, and a trivia game with a celebrity host.

NFL Films Theater—Get the feel of the NFL in a multi-screen format with stereo sound. Feature runs every 20 minutes throughout the day.

CBS Broadcast Booth—A behind-the-scenes look at the production of a sports broadcast. Hundreds of participants will get a chance to be an on-air play-by-play announcer.

A Century of NFL Football—The evolution of the game is graphically depicted in a state-of-the-art display featuring photographs, memorabilia, and rare NFL historic items.

Art of the NFL—A gallery of original NFL art by some of the country's best artists and illustrators depicting the greatest NFL moments and personalities.

NFL Locker Room—A reproduction of an NFL locker room where trainers will demonstrate how players prepare for a game.

Measure Up to the Pros—An interactive attraction that enables fans to measure up against the physical attributes of NFL stars.

Among other attractions are, the Team NFL food court and Victory Grill restaurant, "Make your Own Trading Card," "Look like a Pro" (featuring life-size cutouts of NFL players), a mini American Needle cap factory, a Logo-7 sweatshirt embroidery, a special U.S. Postal Service station offering a commemorative NFL Experience cancellation stamp, a video game arcade, the "NFL Kids Zone" supervised children's playground, an international/World League exhibit, a "Winning Drive" GMC truck raffle, and the "Ultimate Kids Bedroom" NFL merchandise raffle.

NFL Experience corporate sponsors include American Express, American Needle, B. Dalton Bookseller, Coca-Cola/Hardee's, DHL Worldwide Express, Fleer, Foot Locker, Gatorade, GMC Trucks, Impel Marketing, Kodak, Kraft/Oscar Mayer, Leaf, Inc., Logo-7, Miller Brewing Company, Mobil Oil Corporation, Pillsbury, Pro Set Trading Cards, Riddell, Score Trading Cards, Sony, The Upper Deck Company, and Wilson Sporting Goods.

Herb Weitman

Fans at The NFL Experience can attempt to kick a ball through regulation goal-post uprights and will view live demonstrations in a locker-room setting of how trainers prepare players for a game.

Al Messerschmidt

Out of the Past

A salute to former NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle highlighted the NFL Alumni Player of the Year Awards Dinner this past Friday night at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. Rozelle was honored with the NFL Alumni's Old Hero Award, a presentation made annually to people whose careers have made them role models for young people. Past winners have included Walter Cronkite, Bob Hope, and Lee Iacocca. The citation also lauded Rozelle for being "an instrumental figure in the development of the NFL Alumni through its formative stages."

David G. Spielman

Former NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle received the NFL Alumni's Old Hero Award.

Now in its tenth year, the $1,000-per-plate affair included presentation of the NFL Alumni Player of the Year Awards to 11 players selected as the best at their positions during the 1991 season. The winners were chosen by a vote of NFL Alumni members who once played the same positions.

Singer Dionne Warwick provided entertainment for the evening, and sportscaster Ray Scott served as emcee.

The dinner has been staged at the site of the Super Bowl each season since 1983. It serves as a major funding vehicle for youth-oriented activities and programs of the NFL Alumni.

Charity Drives

It's a long tee shot from Minneapolis to Hawaii, where the Westin Kauai course will be the site of this year's Buick Super Bowl Charity Golf Classic on Tuesday, January 28. Since the event began seven years ago at Super Bowl XIX, it has raised more than half a million dollars for charity. This year's tournament will involve more than 200 amateurs, current and former NFL stars, and celebrity players, including defending champion

TRAIN TILL YOU DROP AND WHAT DO YOU GET? FREEZING COLD AND SOAKING WET.

A kayaker's eyes are always focused ahead, alert to any clue the river might care to give about its mood that day. They call it "reading the river" and in this sport you learn to read real fast—otherwise you'll end up getting burned by the short-tempered whitewater.

It takes a lot of years and thousands of miles of going one-on-one with the river to achieve the skill and self-confidence necessary to make it in whitewater kayaking. For all that effort, though, the only sure thing in this sport is that if you're not back trying to master that river the very next day, you're probably not going to make it past the first gate at the next event—much less onto the U.S. National Team.

At Champion International Corporation, we manufacture paper and wood products. We also admire the personal tenacity it takes to excel in this sport and we're proud to sponsor the U.S. Canoe/Kayak Team. With the help of our sponsorship, America's best kayakers and canoeists get the equipment, coaching and support they need to reach the top of their form and their sport—and the chance to compete in the 1992 Summer Games.

Competition at that level is grueling: it takes strength, stamina, concentration and nerve. And if you've ever seen a kayaker paddle furiously downriver—one eye on a boulder, the other on Barcelona—you'd know these amateur athletes deserve all the support they can get.

Champion
Champion International Corporation

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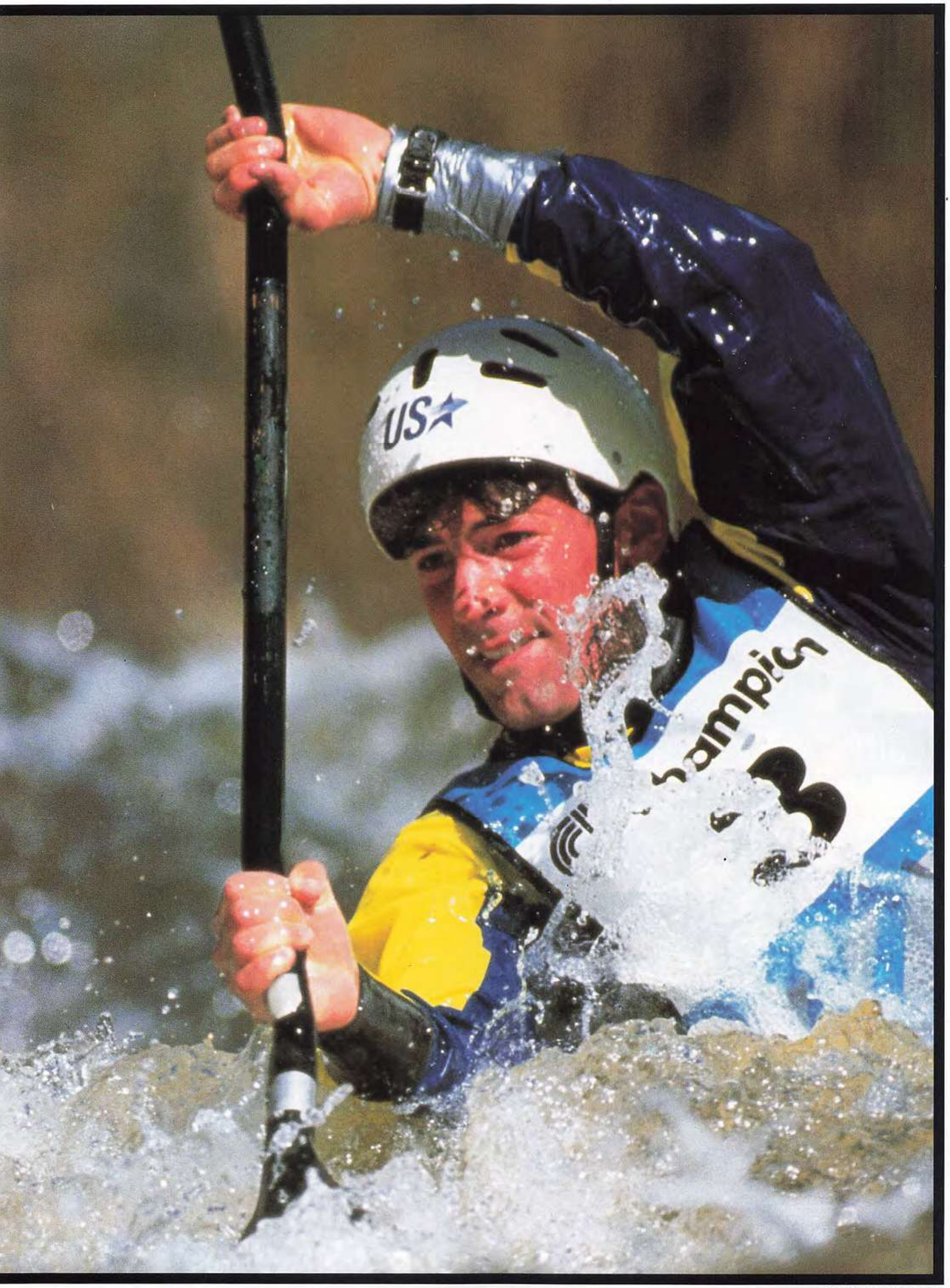

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN HILL

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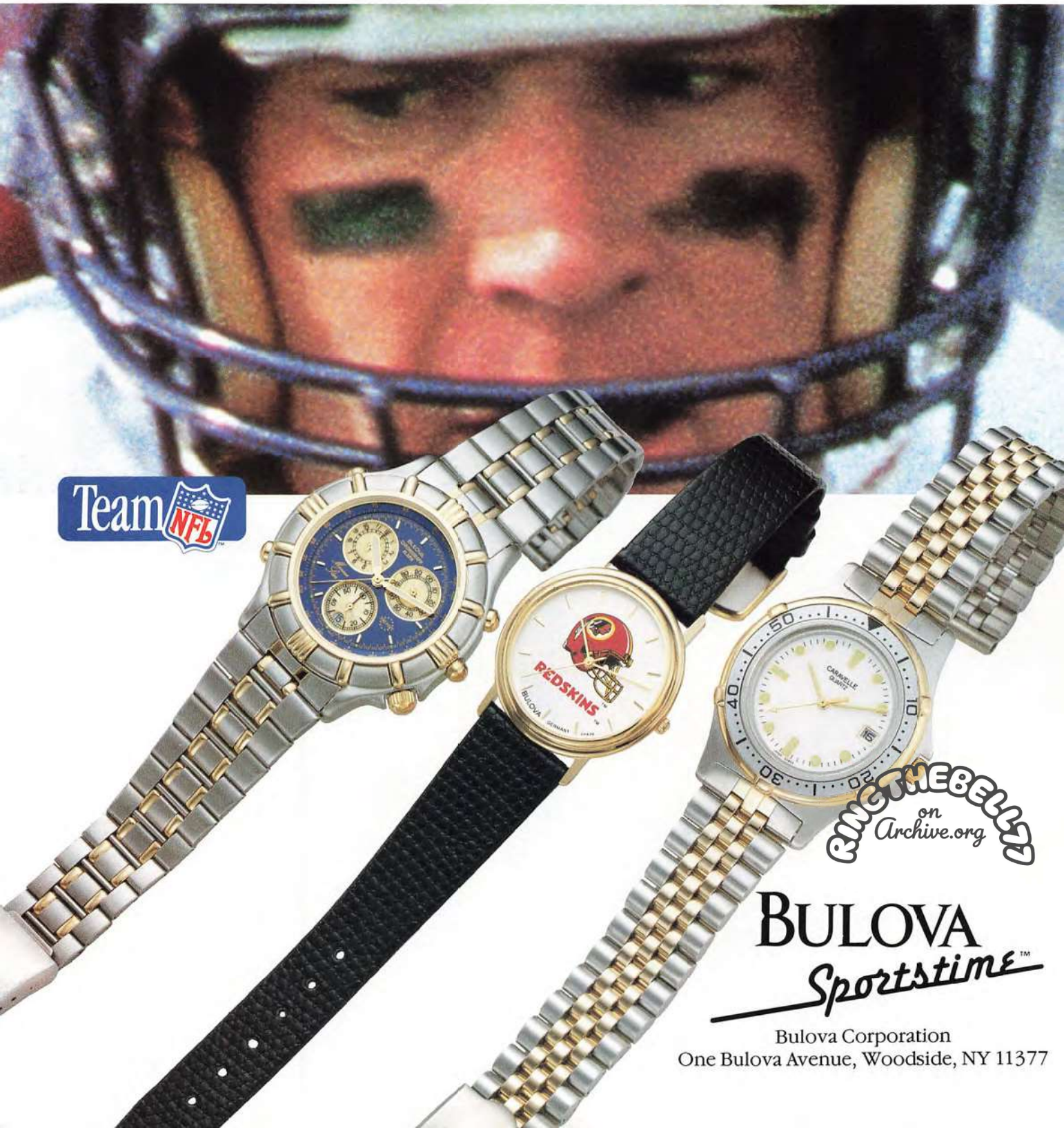

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SUPER BOWL NOW

Jan Stenerud, former winner Dick Anderson, and Pro Football Hall of Famers Mel Blount, Hugh McElhenny, and Jim Taylor.

Participants in the tournament will islandhop to Oahu to compete in the Pro Bowl Charity Golf Classic sponsored by Kraft General Foods on Friday, January 31. The Pro Bowl tournament, which also will include Pro Bowl players and coaches, will be held on the Navy, Marine, and Hickam Field golf courses at Pearl Harbor. Both tournaments are expected to raise in excess of $150,000 for NFL Charities.

Paul Spinelli/NFL Photos

Current and former NFL players and amateurs play golf in Hawaii for charity.

Every One a Winner

One of the highlights of Super Bowl week is the announcement of the winners of three of the NFL's most prestigious awards—the Miller Lite NFL Player of the Year, the NFL Pro Line Man of the Year, and the Pro Set NFL Rookie of the Year.

The Miller Lite NFL Player of the Year Award is presented annually to the NFL's best player as determined by a national media panel coordinated by the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Each week during the NFL season, players of the week are chosen from each active NFL team. A national player of the week also is picked. At the end of the regular season, 28 Miller Lite NFL Team Players of the Year are selected. From that group, six NFL Player of the Year finalists are chosen, one of whom will become the ultimate winner. This year's finalists include Jim Kelly (Buffalo), Mark Rypien (Washington), Barry Sanders (Detroit), Emmitt Smith (Dallas), Pat Swilling (New Orleans), and Thurman Thomas (Buffalo). The Miller Lite NFL Player of the Year program generates more than $125,000 for worthy charities each season.

The NFL Pro Line Man of the Year Award honors the league's outstanding "citizen athlete." At the beginning of the season one nominee from each team is selected on the basis of performance on the field and community service off the field. The winner is chosen from among this elite group, and a $25,000 donation is made by NFL Pro Line to the award-winner's favorite charity. This year's winner is Cincinnati Bengals offensive tackle Anthony Muñoz.

The top new player in the NFL each season is acknowledged with the Pro Set NFL Rookie of the Year Award. Selected by a panel of sports journalists and former NFL rookies of the year, the winner receives a $5,000 donation from Pro Set Inc. for his favorite charity. Past winners have included running backs Emmitt Smith and Mark Carrier (co-recipients in 1990), and Barry Sanders (1989).

All three of this year's NFL honorees were presented with their awards during the "Super Bowl Saturday Night" television special, Saturday, January 25, 7-8:30 P.M. live on TNT.

Chris Hopkins

Awesome Foursome

It sounds like the Mt. Rushmore of the NFL: Halas, Hunt, Lombardi, Rozelle. Those four legendary pro football personalities are the namesakes of the four NFL postseason trophies. The George Halas Trophy and Lamar Hunt Trophy are given to the NFC and AFC Champion teams, respectively. Pro football pioneer Halas, who died in 1983, was a player, coach, and owner of the Chicago Bears. Hunt was a founder of the AFL and currently is AFC president and the owner of the Kansas City Chiefs. Both trophies were awarded for the first time following the 1984 season. The Vince Lombardi Trophy is given to the winning Super Bowl team. It was named for the famed Green Bay and Washington head coach after his death in 1970. And the Pete Rozelle Trophy, given for the first time at Super Bowl XXV, goes to the Super Bowl's most valuable player. Rozelle served as NFL Commissioner for nearly 30 years before retiring in 1989. Made of sterling silver, the Lombardi and Rozelle trophies were designed by Tiffany & Co. The Halas and Hunt trophies are silver on bases of chrome and rosewood.

Jim Turner

Top to bottom: the Vince Lombardi Trophy; NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue awards the Pete Rozelle Trophy; the Hunt and Halas Trophies.

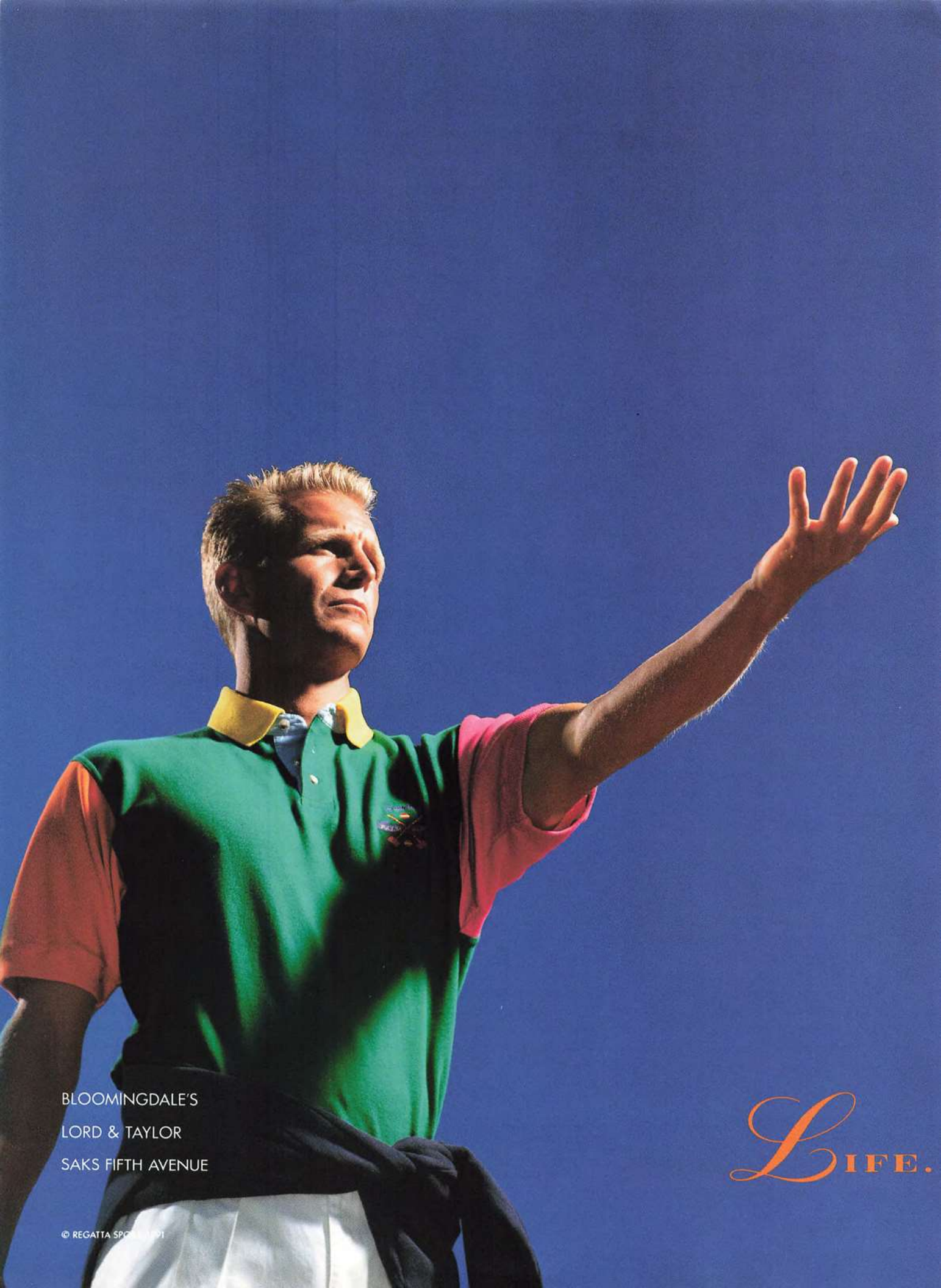
Jim Cornfield

Super Bowl Redux

The Purple People Eaters may have gone gray, but members of the legendary Minnesota Vikings' defensive line participated in the Super Bowl Alumni Classic football game last weekend in the Target Center. A team of retired Vikings stars played a team of Miami Dolphins alumni from the early 1970s in a rematch of Super Bowl VIII. The game, sponsored by Holiday Stores, Coca-Cola, KSTP-TV, and Marriott Hotels, was officiated by NFL officials. George Toma, the Super Bowl groundskeeper, prepared the field as he had done for the teams' original NFL Championship meeting. Super Bowl VIII was played at Houston's Rice Stadium on January 13, 1974, with 71,882 fans in attendance. Both teams brought 12-2 records into the game, which the Dolphins won 24-7.

Lessons in Football...And Life

Continuing the tradition of the popular Super Bowl youth clinics held in the host cities of the past three Super Bowls, the Super Bowl XXVI Clinic was held last Sunday, January 19, in Minneapolis. Approximately 1,500 underprivileged youths joined nearly four dozen NFL players from NFL teams around the league to learn football skills and hear strong pro-education and anti-drug messages. The participants were selected through a contest within the Minneapolis schools involved in the NFL's F.A.C.T. (Football & Academics: A Championship Team) program. The clinic was produced by former NFL player Nat Moore and NFL Properties, Inc.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SUPER BOWL NOW

Jon Hayt

Superstar Miami quarterback Dan Marino instructs kids in football basics at one of last year's Super Bowl XXV clinic sessions held in Tampa.

A positive outgrowth of these Super Bowl clinics has been the staging of local NFL Minicamps for Kids in conjuction with NFL teams at home stadiums. Twenty-seven of these minicamps were held from April through July in 1991. Sponsored this year by Nike and Pro Set, the NFL Minicamps for Kids are scheduled again for spring/summer 1992.

Tom Allen/NFL Photos

It's in the Cards

If this *Official Super Bowl XXVI Game Program* seems weightier than usual, it may be because Cincinnati Bengals offensive tackle Anthony Muñoz is between pages 176 and 177. The 1991 NFL Man of the Year is featured in a nine-card introductory insert of the new 1992 Pro Line Profiles trading card series. Pro Line Profiles will include a selection of significant moments from the lives and playing careers of NFL Superstars. Pro Line Profiles will be available next summer.

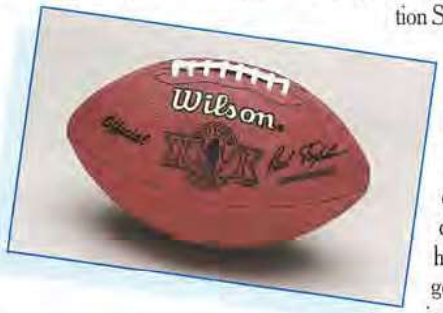
Take a Seat

For the seventh consecutive year, GTE, the Telecommunications Consultant to the NFL and Super Bowl XXVI, will provide a unique in-stadium gift to fans attending the game at the Metrodome. The GTE Super Bowl XXVI seat cushions have been specially designed with a colorful fold-over pouch for the inclusion of additional Super Bowl XXVI souvenirs. In providing this Super Bowl giveaway, GTE once again helped local community groups by involving them in the seat-cushion distribution process. This year's effort will be led by volunteers from the Association of Minneapolis Children's Medical Center, which has been raising funds for the needy children of Minnesota for 32 years. Throughout Super Bowl week, these diligent volunteers have placed more than 63,000 cushions in the Metrodome.

Fans in the stadium will find there's a gift inside their GTE gift. Located within the seat cushion pouches—along with the Coca-Cola stunt card for participation in the halftime show— is an album of 48 Pro Set trading cards specially prepared for Super Bowl attendees. These albums are provided with the compliments of American Express.

Golden Years

If you have been watching closely, you may have noticed something different about the official NFL football this season. To commemorate Wilson Sporting Goods' fiftieth year as the official football supplier of the National Football League, the Wilson logo on this year's ball has been printed in metallic gold. The special edition Super Bowl XXVI ball used on the field at the Metrodome today will have the gold lettering, along with the Super Bowl XXVI logo and the date and site of the game. A limited number of these commemorative Super Bowl XXVI footballs are available at selected sporting goods outlets, including the Foot Locker store in The NFL Experience at the Minneapolis Covention Center.



The Super Bowl XXVI football commemorates Wilson's 50 years as the NFL's official ball.

Guest Stars

The roster of contributors to today's game program includes three personalities not usually associated with football. Adding their unique personal insights on football in general and the NFL in particular are former senator Eugene McCarthy, television commentator Andy Rooney, and playwright August Wilson.

Eugene McCarthy

McCarthy, a native of Watkins, Minnesota, served as a senator from Minnesota from 1958-1970 and was a Democratic candidate in the 1968 presidential election. Also a former professor and syndicated columnist, he is the author of *Required Reading*, and is at work on a new book. McCarthy's Super Bowl column begins on page 112.

Andy Rooney

CBS

August Wilson

Ellen Jaskol/*L.A. Times*

Phil Barber

Tom Allen/NFL Photos

Rooney's sometimes caustic, but always amusing and enlightening social commentaries, have made him a beloved fixture on CBS's long-running "60 Minutes" program. Also the author of two bestselling books, Rooney's contribution begins on page 98.

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Wilson, a former Minnesota resident, is the author of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Fences*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, and *The Piano Lesson*. Wilson's most recent play, *Two Trains Running*, premiered in 1990. It won the American Theater Critics Association Award. Wilson's football tribute begins on page 133.

Another columnist adding his perspective on pro football in this issue is the NFL's *GameDay* magazine editor, Phil Barber. Barber's report on Super Bowl LXII begins on page 150.

Members Only

A select group of journalists and photographers has attended every Super Bowl to date. This group, unofficially called the Super 26 Club, includes writers Dick Connor, *Denver Post*; Art Daley, *Green Bay Press Gazette*; Melvin Durslag, *Los Angeles Times*, retired; Larry Felser, *Buffalo Evening News*; Jerry Green, *Detroit News*; Jerry Izenberg, *Newark Star-Ledger*; Dave Klein, *Newark Star-Ledger*; Will McDonough, *Boston Globe*; Norm Miller, *New York Post*; Bob Oates, *Los Angeles Times*; Ed Pope, *Miami Herald*; Cooper Rollow, *Chicago Tribune*; and John Steadman, *Baltimore Evening News*.

Photographers include John Biever, Vernon Biever, David Boss, Walter Iooss, Jr. (*Sports Illustrated*), Mickey Palmer, Dick Raphael, and Tony Tomsic.

Honorary members include: Bill Granholm, National Football League; Lamar Hunt, Kansas

City Chiefs; Lee Remmel, Green Bay Packers; former NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle; Ed Sabol, NFL Films; Steve Sabol, NFL Films; Art Spieller, NFL Films; Jack Steadman, Kansas City Chiefs; and Don Weiss, National Football League.

Merv Corning

The MVPs: XXV

New York Giants running back Ottis Anderson (*right*) was a self-described "where are they now?" candidate for three seasons after coming to New York from St. Louis in 1986. Then, an injury to starter Joe Morris in 1989 put Anderson into the backfield. Last January at Super Bowl XXV, Anderson, the NFL's oldest running back at 33, earned the Pete Rozelle Award as the game's most valuable player. Anderson was a dominating force in the Giants' ball-control game plan against the Bills. He gained 102 yards on 21 carries and scored a touchdown in New York's 20-19 victory. Of his performance, Anderson said, "I knew I could do it because I've done it before."

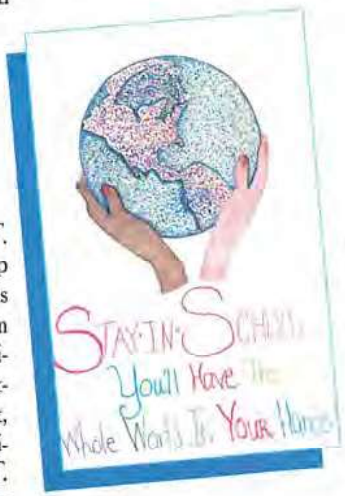
Just the F.A.C.T., Ma'am

The NFL kicked off its ambitious F.A.C.T. (Football & Academics: A Championship Team) program this season, and the response was impressive. The nationwide education program was designed to motivate children to learn by utilizing a special series of official NFL Pro Set football cards (sponsored by Mobil Oil and Pro Set, Inc.) along with in-classroom educational materials. In each city, local educators, called F.A.C.T. "coaches," trained teachers on how to present the program materials, and acted as liaisons with NFL Properties, the league's marketing and licensing arm. The NFL F.A.C.T. materials were created by Bank Street College of Education in New York and monitored in each city by Books and Beyond, both education-oriented firms.

The NFL F.A.C.T. program originated as a pilot project in Cincinnati last season in conjunction with Pro Set and Cincinnati councilman and former Bengals star Reggie Williams. The success of that program led the NFL to expand F.A.C.T. to all 28 of its team markets.

A highlight of this season's F.A.C.T. program was a contest to create a poster that depicts the NFL's "Stay in School" message. The winning entry—selected by NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue—was done by Tara Bonnes, a fourth-grader at Citrus Park Elementary School in Tampa, Florida. Tara was awarded four tickets to the Pro Bowl in Honolulu, Hawaii. Her teacher, Carla Goewert, and the area F.A.C.T. coach, Janice Torgerson, each received two tickets; the school receives a $5,000 grant.

"We are committed to making the education of today's youth the number-one public service activity of the NFL," Tagliabue says. "We have a wide variety of programs geared to high school, junior high, and elementary school students, and our players and coaches have been instrumental in helping us implement these projects."



Fourth-grader Tara Bonnes of Tampa, Florida, won the F.A.C.T. poster contest with her entry (above).

The Eastman Kodak Company and Pro Football Hall of Fame defensive tackle Alan Page sponsor another education-oriented NFL program, the Kodak/Alan Page Challenge. Open to fourth-graders in 45 urban school districts nationwide, this three-year-old program is based on an essay contest on the importance of education. This year's grand prize winner was Joseph Twelves of San Diego. In his essay, he compared himself to a fledgling eagle. He won a trip to the Pro Bowl.

Other NFL educational programs include NFL Minicamps for Kids, Super Bowl Clinics, NFL Teacher of the Month Award, "Stay in School" public service announcements, NFL Education videos, J.C.Penney "Take a Player to School," Super Bowl Minority Scholarship Grants, "Certified Champions" campaign, and NFL Charities.

Perchance to Dream

Former Minnesota Vikings all-pro linebacker Matt Blair pursued his dream of becoming an accomplished photographer after his retirement from the NFL in 1985. And, once his dream was well in hand, Blair and professional photographer Mike Blumberg turned their talents to Homeless Dreams, a project designed to help the homeless in the Twin Cities area.

Mike Blumberg

Former Vikings linebacker Matt Blair tackled the homeless problem with his camera.

Blair and Blumberg created and produced Homeless Dreams books and calendars containing photos of national and local celebrities in costumes and settings depicting their favorite fantasies. Former Vikings head coach Bud Grant and country-western stars the Oak Ridge Boys were among the celebrities who donated their time and names to the project. To date, sales of the books, calendars, and limited-edition prints have generated more than $75,000 for the homeless through Catholic Charities.

Roasting Rashad

Former Minnesota Vikings wide receiver Ahmad Rashad burned more than a few defenders in his time. But it was his turn to be roasted last Thursday night at the Radisson South Hotel in Bloomington. Master of ceremonies Bill Murray and a host of special guests took their best shots at Rashad, now with NBC Sports. Proceeds from the event went toward funding the Chair of Cancer Immunobiology at the new University of Minnesota Cancer Center. ■

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And to top it off, it's a great masculine scent. If you order your decanter today, you'll also receive the first edition of our ticket replica trading card collection, free. Order your Super Bowl XXVI Commemorative Cologne while the supply lasts and before the memory fades. For information, call 1-800-426-BOWL.

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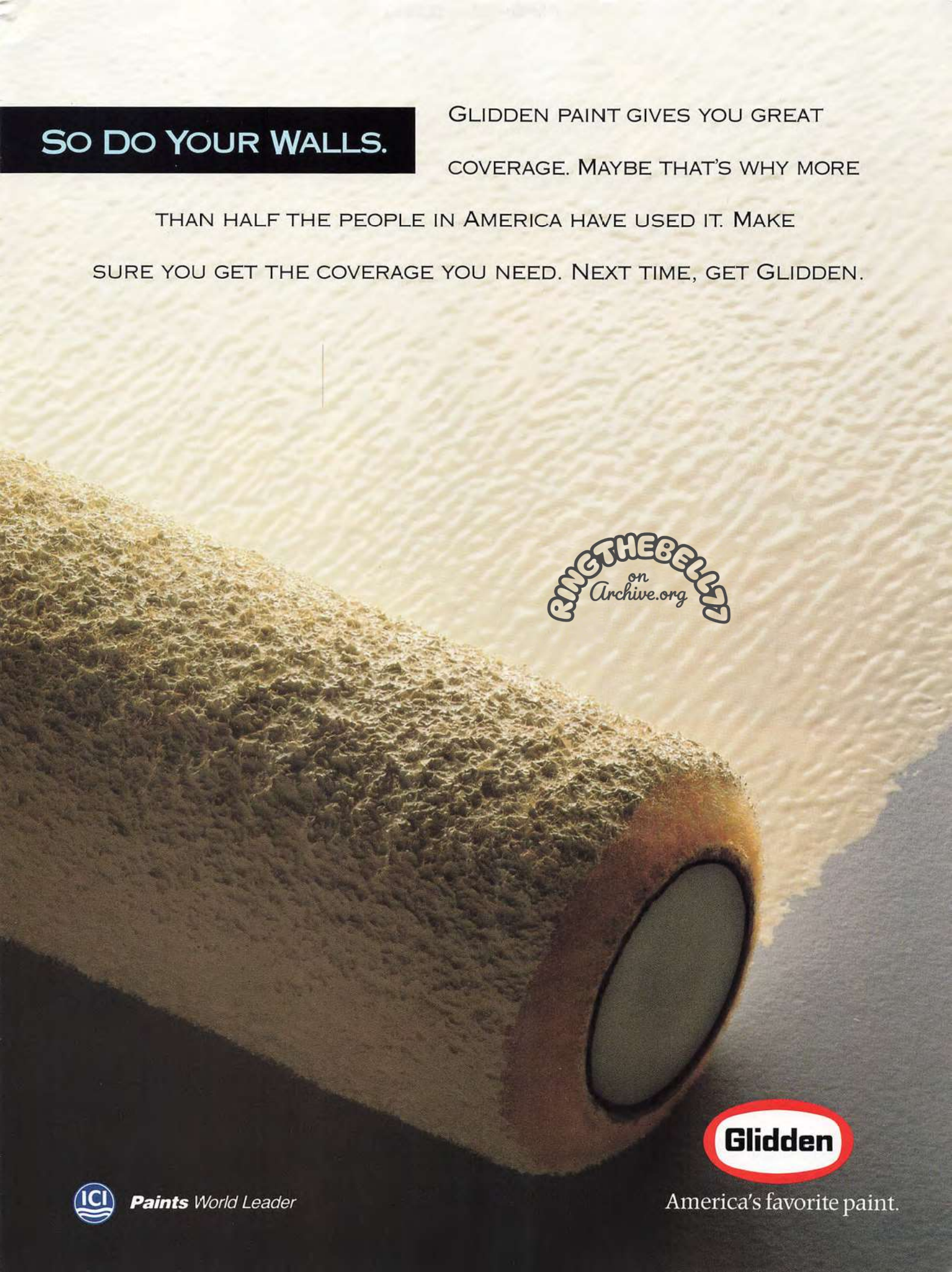
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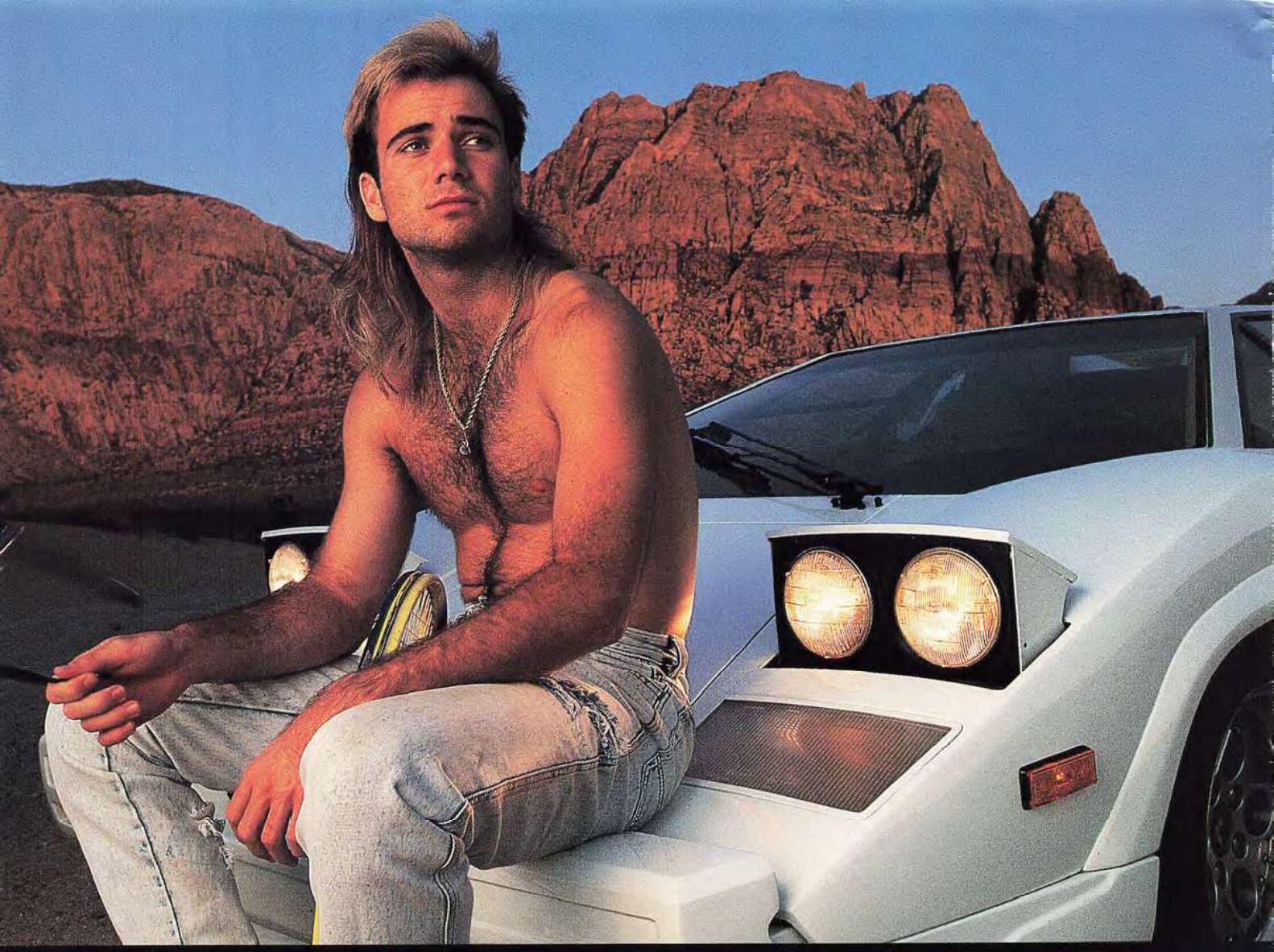

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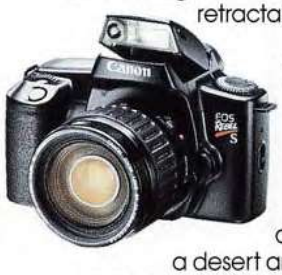

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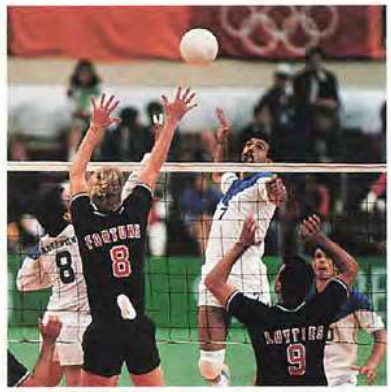
SUPER BOWL THEN

Turning Points

One Game, One Play, One Decision — Sometimes That's All It Takes

Stories by John Fawaz, Jim Gigliotti, and Brian Peterson

If we listened to true sports fans, we'd have Olympics coverage on 3 cable channels for 15 days, 24 hours a day.



We listened.

One thing we've learned from sports fans is that when the summer Olympics begin, nothing else matters. And now there's coverage as dedicated to the games as the fans who watch them.

The Olympics TripleCast.

In addition to the NBC broadcast, there will be three cable channels, simultaneously bringing you all the best events. So you can choose what to watch, when you want to watch it.

It's marathon Olympics coverage for 15 days, 24 hours a day.

So you can choose to experience the greatest track and field moments as they happen. Or, if you prefer, you can switch to events like gymnastics and basketball.

With no commercials. And no interruptions.

We can't predict what kind of year our athletes will have. But one thing is certain—it will be a very good year for true sports fans.

For more information, don't wait. Call 1-800-OLYMPIC, Ext. 83 now. The Olympics TripleCast. It's a whole new way to see the games.

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A WHOLE NEW WAY TO SEE THE GAMES

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Super THEN Bowl

TURNING POINTS

Championships Aren't Awarded After Opening Games, They Are Constructed Over the Long Season and After Crucial Plays, Decisions

The equivalent physics concept might be "escape velocity," i.e. the minimum velocity that a body must attain to overcome the gravitational attraction of another body, such as the earth. Picture the helmets of the 28 NFL teams orbiting a giant football. As they circle, some slow to a virtual standstill, while others become stronger and accelerate. At some point, one of the helmets will careen off into space, eventually landing gently on the lofty pedestal reserved for Super Bowl winners. The idea here is that NFL champions are not born; they are methodically constructed over the course of a season. No matter how it might appear in hindsight, they are not christened "World Champion" at the outset. Even the 1972 Miami Dolphins, the only NFL team ever to climb from the wreckage of an entire season with a spotless (17-0) record, had their episodes of doubt or instability. And today's participants? Some of you may have touted both of them in preseason; well done, but your bold predictions were little more than that until the teams progressed to a certain level of confidence and efficiency ...until they reached their turning point. But exactly when, and how, did that happen? In some cases it is hard to determine, especially at the time, though other cases are glaringly obvious. The event, if it even can be categorized as an "event," can be as visible as a switch of starting quarterbacks, or as private as well-timed locker-room oratory. It can arrive in training camp or at midseason or in the conference championship game, but at some undetermined moment it does arrive, and afterward a team has been transformed into a cohesive entity with its focus riveted on one goal: the Vince Lombardi Trophy. The seven stories that follow should serve as clear examples, helping to prove the old adage: You don't have to be a rocket scientist to determine escape velocity.

The Road to Redemption Passed Through Oakland

Respect. Redemption. The emotional stability of a franchise.

Words could not describe how much winning the 1969 AFL Championship Game meant to the Kansas City Chiefs.

Not only was a trip to the Super Bowl at stake, but the last obstacle was the Oakland Raiders, a team that had defeated the Chiefs in seven of eight previous head-to-head meetings.

Oakland was making its third consecutive appearance in the title game, and since Kansas City's appearance in Super Bowl I, the Raiders had owned the Chiefs.

The year following Super Bowl I was difficult for Kansas City and head coach Hank Stram. The downfall of the 1967 season came early—in a 23-21 loss to the Raiders, who eventually advanced to Super Bowl II after humbling the second-place Chiefs again near the end of the regular season, 44-22 in Kansas City.

When the Raiders traveled to Kansas City for their first meeting of the 1968 season, things were different.

Known for his wide-open, innovative offensive coaching philosophy, Stram became conservative, calling only three passing plays as the Chiefs up-

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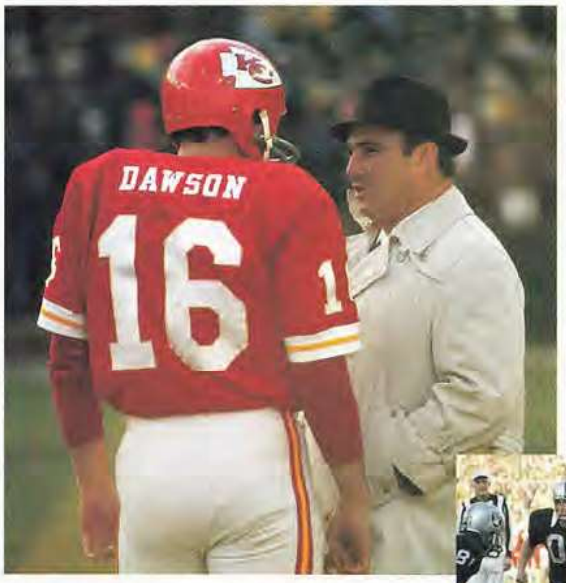
TURNING POINTS



Malcolm Emmons

Oakland intercepted Len Dawson 5 times in the 1968 AFL Championship Game, but he was close to flawless in the 1969 rematch, which Chiefs coach Hank Stram (above) called "our biggest victory."

ended the Raiders 24-10. Kansas City ground out 18 rushing first downs and 294 rushing yards.

But the Raiders weren't intimidated by the setback. They later bombarded the Chiefs 38-21 in Oakland, then put the knife deeper into Kansas City with a 41-6 romp in the AFL divisional playoffs.

It was the worst defeat in history for Kansas City, which had tied Oakland for the division title. The Chiefs were four-point favorites.

Still, as the 1969 season approached, the Chiefs were optimistic.

"I sent a letter out to our players after that game [the 1969 AFL Divisional Playoff]," Stram told Joe McGuff of the *Kansas City Star*. "I explained to them that our loss to Oakland was a bitter disappointment, not because of what people might say or think, but because we failed to accomplish what we set out to do as a family—win the AFL championship and the Super Bowl. I pointed out that people with pride and character grow in the face of adversity and that our setback was only temporary."

It would take every ounce of the Chiefs' optimism to carry them through 1969. Early in the season quarterback Len Dawson injured his knee and his backup Jacky Lee injured an ankle.

The burden of winning games then fell on the shoulders of young Mike Livingston, a second-year, third-string quarterback.

Livingston, who had played only five minutes in 1968, performed like a seasoned veteran, leading the Chiefs to six victories in six starts.

But Dawson returned in time for the first game with the Raiders that year. In retrospect, the Chiefs probably wished he hadn't.

In front of a record home crowd of 51,982, Dawson threw 5 interceptions and Kansas City fumbled twice as the Raiders won 27-24.

Despite the setback to Oakland, the Chiefs continued to roll. When they met the Raiders for the final time in the regular season, the Western Division championship was the prize.

Dave Boss

The Kansas City heroes included Emmitt Thomas (above), who had 2 interceptions, and Otis Taylor (left), who made a crucial 35-yard catch.

Stram needed something to break the Raiders' spirit, and he settled on the strategy used the last time Kansas City defeated Oakland.

He employed a strict ball-control offense, passing only 6 times for 29 yards. It didn't work. The Raiders won 10-6.

"If you are upset about the game plan, it was my plan," Stram told the players who had second-guessed his strategy at the time. "If that is the reason we lost, then I lost the game. But I think it was a proper game plan and a sound game plan. It was my decision and I will stand by it."

"If this had been the final game of the season, I think it would have destroyed the Chiefs," one Kansas City player said at the time.

Instead, the Chiefs confronted the Raiders one more time—in the AFL Championship Game.

After the second regular-season loss to the Raiders, the Chiefs turned back the Super Bowl III-champion Jets 13-6 in the divisional playoff.

Oakland had a much easier time with Houston, routing the Oilers 56-7. The Raiders were almost everyone's choice to go to Super Bowl IV.

"I'm picking Oakland to win, even though I like the Kansas City players better than I like some of the Oakland players," Jets quarterback Joe Namath said at the time. "But I'd rather see Oakland represent the AFL in the Super Bowl because I think the Raiders are the finest team in football."

It wasn't to be. Pacific winds sometimes change directions abruptly—especially in the San Francisco Bay. And they were blowing Kansas City's way.

Stram threw the running playbook out the window and returned to his free-wheeling passing offense. But even with Stram's change in game plan, it turned into a defensive slugfest.

After a 7-7 standoff in the first half, the Chiefs dominated the last thirty minutes. They scored 10 points and held the Raiders scoreless.

Kansas City turned the ball over three times inside its 30-yard line but intercepted 3 passes by Raiders quarterback Daryle Lamonica in that same time period.

NFL Photos

With a 17-7 victory, the Chiefs headed to Super Bowl IV against the Minnesota Vikings. The stigma was gone.

"This definitely was our biggest victory," Stram said at the time. "It was the most important because of the circumstances involved in the series with Oakland. You can come close and miss only so often; then it begins to have a very adverse effect on a team."

Consider adversity overcome.

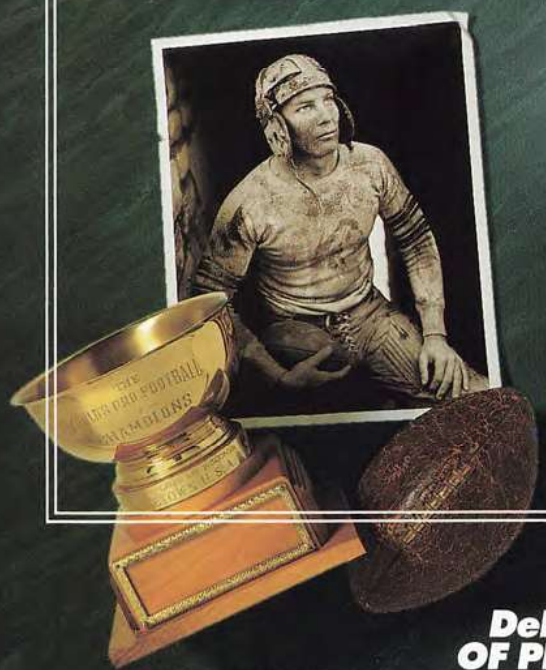
COWBOYS 1971

Landry Chose Staubach, and It Was Roger and Out

Numerous winning seasons had ended in frustration. It was a team that couldn't win The Big One.

After five losing seasons, the Cowboys finally broke even in 1965, going 7-7. They made their first trip to the playoffs in 1966, losing 34-27 to Green Bay in the

The NFL Throwbacks Classics



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TURNING POINTS

NFL Championship Game. Packers safety Tom Brown intercepted a Don Meredith pass in the final seconds with Dallas on the Green Bay 2-yard line. The victory put the Packers in Super Bowl I.

A year later, with 13 seconds remaining in the NFL Championship Game, Packers quarterback Bart Starr sneaked into the end zone to give Green Bay a 21-17 comeback victory in the storied Ice Bowl.

In 1968, the Cleveland Browns continued the agony, upsetting the heavily favored, 12-2 Cowboys 31-20 for the Eastern Conference title.

In 1969, the Browns piled it on, winning 38-14 in the NFC playoffs.

Even when Dallas finally reached Super Bowl V in 1970, the result was the same. Baltimore kicker Jim O'Brien's 32-yard field goal with five seconds remaining gave the Colts a 16-13 victory.

"At least we're closing in on them," said Cowboys owner Clint Murchison at the time. "We got it down to five seconds from thirteen."

All of that began to change on a brisk November day in St. Louis in 1971.

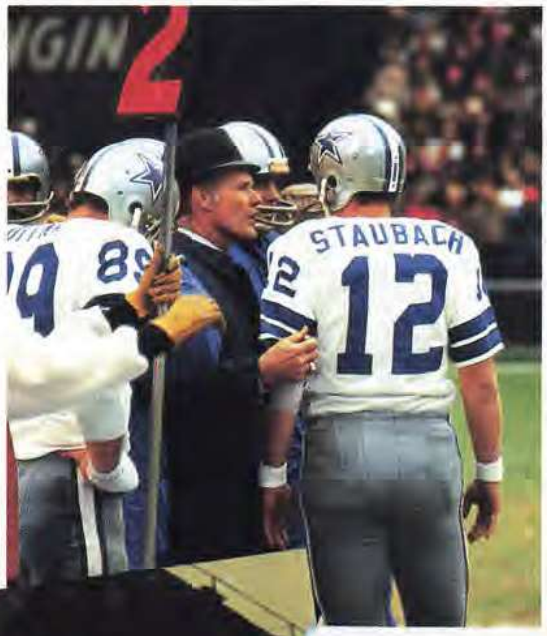
Heading into that season, the Cowboys and their fans wondered what changes were needed to enable the team to win an NFL title.

The focus was on the quarterback.

During the preseason, Roger Staubach openly challenged head coach Tom Landry and felt that he should be the starting quarterback. Craig Morton, who had started the previous year, felt he had earned the top job by leading the team into Super Bowl V.

"I'm ready now," said Staubach at the time. "If I don't start or play this season, it will be my last with the Cowboys."

"He's [Staubach] going to have to do a lot more than he has," said Morton. "You know, he has to beat me out. I don't have to beat him out."



NFL Photos

Herb Weitman

The Cowboys' Toni Fritsch made a 26-yard field goal with 1:43 left to seal the victory over St. Louis. Dallas wouldn't lose again all season.

Unable to decide, Landry began the season saying he had two starting quarterbacks and that both would get equal playing time. Landry even had them rotating every other play at times in the first seven games.

Staubach and Morton were as different as fire and ice. The only thing they had in common was the fact that each played quarterback and each played the position well.

Staubach, who graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and had won the Heisman Trophy in his junior year, was selected by the Cowboys in the tenth round of the 1964 NFL draft as a future choice.

But then he spent four years in Vietnam. After joining the Cowboys in 1969 as a 27-year-old rookie, Staubach established himself with a powerful arm and an assertive attitude.

On the other hand, Morton attended the University of California—a school known for its liberal views and anti-war protests. After an All-America college career, Morton was selected by the Cowboys in the first round of the 1965 NFL draft.

Morton was single and carefree. His style of play relied on guile to make up for shortcomings in physical strength.

However, with a 4-3 record early in the 1971 season, none of the differences between his quarterbacks mattered to Landry. All he cared about was getting his team to Super Bowl VI.

The week before Dallas's game against St. Louis, Landry made a bold decision. He scrapped the system of platooning quarterbacks and made Staubach number one.

Dallas's 16-13 victory over St. Louis, on Toni Fritsch's 26-yard field goal with 1:43 left to play, confirmed Landry's decision.

Choosing between Roger Staubach and Craig Morton was one of Tom Landry's (left) toughest coaching decisions, but history supports his judgment. Staubach is in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Staubach was the full-time starter—a job he would not relinquish until his retirement in 1979. And his greatest attribute as a quarterback came to the forefront—an uncanny ability to make big plays and find ways to win.

The Cardinals couldn't stop him. Staubach completed 20 of 31 passes for 199 yards and 1 touchdown. He also was the Cowboys' second-leading rusher, gaining 60 yards on only 7 carries.

When the Cowboys needed a pass, Staubach found his receivers. When he was pressured, Staubach scrambled for big yardage. The Cardinals led 10-3 at halftime, but he never gave up.

St. Louis served as the Cowboys' launching pad to Super Bowl VI as Staubach led his team to nine consecutive victories, including playoff wins over Minnesota and San Francisco.

He was nearly flawless, passing for 9 touchdowns after the St. Louis game and throwing only 1 interception. In a 20-7 victory over Philadelphia, he led the team with 90 rushing yards and passed for 176.

In victories over the New York Jets and Giants, the Cowboys scored a total of 92 points, with Staubach completing a combined 20 of 29 passes for 400 yards and 6 touchdowns.

For the season, he completed 59.7 percent of his passes for 1,882 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Dallas rolled over Miami 24-3 in Super Bowl VI, and Staubach, who completed 12 of 19 passes for 119 yards and 2 touchdowns, was named the game's most valuable player.

Staubach eventually earned a place in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, ending his career in 1979 as the NFL's all-time career passing leader.

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STEELERS 1974

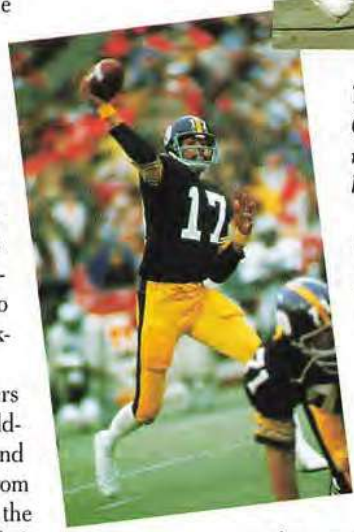
When Bradshaw Matured, the Puzzle Was Complete

In retrospect, the Pittsburgh Steelers' dynasty of the 1970s almost seems to have been predestined. It's easy to forget that there was nothing preordained about the Steelers, or about their quarterback, Terry Bradshaw.

Pittsburgh did not have the look of a dynasty entering the 1974 season. Two years earlier, the Steelers had been a team on the rise after shocking the Oakland Raiders for their first-ever playoff victory, then pushing the Dolphins to the limit in the AFC Championship Game.

The franchise that had stumbled and bumbled for 40 years appeared poised to challenge for its first NFL title. Led by running back Franco Harris and a strong defense, this seemed to be a team to be reckoned with in 1973.

Carl Skalak



Tony Tomsic

Terry Bradshaw (above) versus Joe Gilliam (left) seems like no contest in retrospect, but neither passer had proved himself by mid-1974.

But the Steelers managed only a wild-card spot in 1973, and took a quick exit from the playoffs when the Raiders avenged their 1972 defeat with a 33-14 blowout.

Fans did not have far to look for a scapegoat. Pittsburgh's problem was at quarterback. Unless the team made a change, some doubters said, the Steelers would take their place alongside the rest of the could-have-been teams in franchise history.

It was an ironic twist, because in 1970, when the Steelers drafted Terry Bradshaw, he was supposed to be their savior.

Bradshaw struggled mightily during his first two years, but he made considerable improvement in 1972 and 1973. To many, however, Bradshaw was the latest of the Steelers' long list of first-round flops.

Bradshaw started the 1974 season on the bench. He had reported to camp late because of a players' strike, and when he got there he found that he had lost his starting job to Joe Gilliam, who had displayed a hot hand in preseason.

Gilliam's hot hand carried over into the regular season, translating into some impressive numbers during the early weeks. A depressed and frustrated Bradshaw stewed on the bench. At one point, he even thought about quitting, before taking, as he described it, a "little self-inventory."

The result was a new attitude, which soon would pay dividends, for both Bradshaw and the team. Steelers coach Chuck Noll, a firm believer in the running game, was dismayed by Pittsburgh's reliance on the pass with Gilliam in the lineup. When Gilliam faltered after six games, Noll, hoping to restore balance, gave Bradshaw his job back.

Three weeks later, after a loss to Cincinnati, Bradshaw was back on the bench. This time, however, he handled his demotion with grace, thanks to his new-found maturity. He later returned to start, but once again appeared headed to the bench after a loss to Houston.

Instead, Noll gave Bradshaw another shot, starting him against New England. It was for keeps, as it turned out. Playing with renewed confidence, Bradshaw finally was able to win the respect of his teammates. He led Pittsburgh to victories over the Patriots and Bengals, giving the Steelers a 10-3-1 record and the AFC Central title.

Carl Skalak

The Steel Curtain already had been forged into a dominant defense by '74. With a strong running game that featured Franco Harris, all the team really lacked was an established quarterback.

Now that their quarterback had come of age, the Steelers' dynasty took off. Against Buffalo in the playoffs, he led the Steelers' offense to 29 first downs and 438 total yards in a 32-14 victory. In the AFC Championship Game in Oakland, the Steelers trailed 10-3 after three quarters. But Bradshaw led Pittsburgh to three fourth-quarter touchdowns, Harris gained 111 yards, and the defense stymied the Raiders in a 24-13 win.

The Steelers would use that formula—fourth-quarter heroics by Bradshaw, Harris's running, and great defense—to win all four of their titles. Against the Vikings in Super Bowl IX, Harris ran for a Super Bowl-record 158 yards and the defense held Minnesota to 17 rushing yards. Still, with 10 minutes remaining, Pittsburgh led only 9-6. A bystander for most of the game, Bradshaw stepped up to lead the Steelers on a 66-yard touchdown march that clinched Pittsburgh's 16-6 victory.

Pittsburgh repeated the next year, scoring 14 points in the fourth quarter to overcome Dallas 21-17 in Super Bowl X. Although Bradshaw passed for 2 touchdowns against the Cowboys, including a game-clinching 64-yard score to Lynn Swann, he was not given

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1980
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We present our Home Theater System. A completely integrated audio/video unit.

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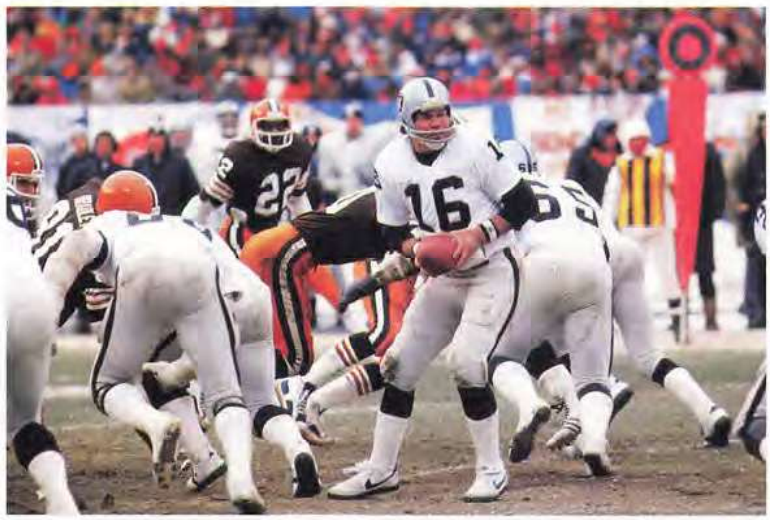
much credit for that championship, either. Even Bradshaw, in his autobiography, titled the chapter on Super Bowls IX and X, "Along for the Ride."

But if Bradshaw was only a bit player in those games, he took center stage in Super Bowls XIII and XIV, earning most-valuable-player honors in both. Against Dallas in XIII, he passed for 318 yards and 4 touchdowns, leading Pittsburgh to 14 fourth-quarter points that proved to be the difference in a 35-31 victory over the Cowboys. Against Los Angeles in XIV, Bradshaw passed for 309 yards and 2 touchdowns in a 31-19 win over the Rams. Once again, he and the Steelers owned the final 15 minutes, scoring 2 fourth-quarter touchdowns to overcome the Rams.

Once the laughingstock of the NFL, the Steelers had become the first team to win four Super Bowls, thanks in large part to a first-round pick who far exceeded even their wildest hopes. Bradshaw parlayed Noll's "last shot" into nearly a decade as the Steelers' starter, a run that included six consecutive division titles and four Super Bowl championships. Once one of the most-maligned players in the game, Bradshaw ended up as one of the most-lauded, a transformation that was capped by his induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1989.

Tony Tomsic



Each successive week, Jim Plunkett (16, above) seemed to bring the Raiders back from a more precarious plight. A last-second, 14-12 playoff victory at Cleveland was especially miraculous.

RAIDERS 1980

They Found Cinderella on the QB Scrap Heap

When the 1980 season began, there were several places the Oakland Raiders could have expected to be in January, 1981. They might have found themselves in Los Angeles, if their lawsuit against the NFL were successful; they might have found themselves in Oakland, amidst embittered fans; or they might find themselves in limbo, in neither location but selling season tickets in both.

One place they did not expect to be was in New Orleans, site of Super Bowl XV. Variously described as old, outmoded, and just plain awful, almost every preseason publication predicted that the Raiders would be planning for the 1981 season in January after what was certain to be a last-place finish in the AFC West.

Oakland's quarterback situation made the predicament seem even more desperate. The Raiders seemingly had traded down in that department, sending Ken Stabler to Houston in exchange for Dan Pastorini. The goal was to put the bomb back in the Raiders' offense, but to most experts it was a questionable move, because Stabler was coming off a season in which he passed for 26 touchdowns and a club-record 3,615 yards. Even Raiders coach Tom Flores was dismayed, saying, "We are getting a fine quarterback, but we are losing a great one."

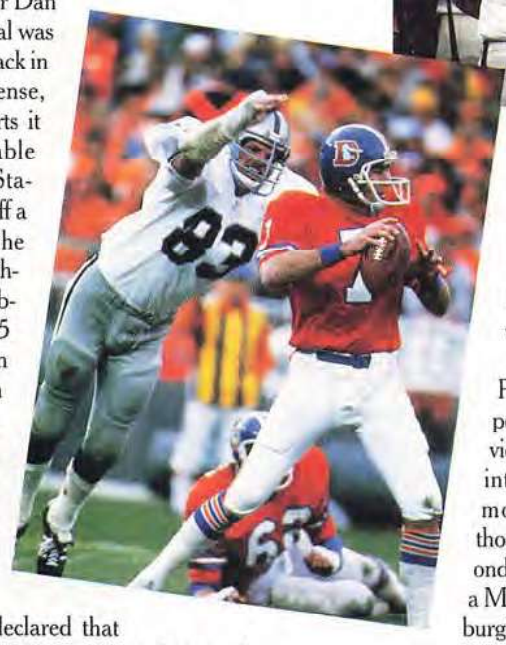
One preseason publication declared that "the loss of Stabler seems to mean the loss of Oakland's principal source of strength. If the Raiders have a ready source of replenishment, it has been well hidden from public view."

The script proved accurate for the first five games. The Raiders were 2-3, the offense was sputtering, and the team was in disarray. It appeared as if the Raiders' long-bomb philosophy was antiquated in an age of complex passing attacks and zone defenses. Worse, their half of the quarterback swap was out for the year: Pastorini was sidelined with a broken leg.

There was talk of firing Flores, of playing rookie Marc Wilson at quarterback, and basically writing off the season. In stepped Jim Plunkett, a refugee from two NFL teams who almost had retired after being cut by the 49ers in 1978. Even the Raiders, those masters of hyperbole, could not have imagined what would happen next.

An attacking defense led by linebacker Ted Hendricks (83, below) made things a lot easier for Plunkett, who got a hug from coach Tom Flores (right) after polishing off the Eagles in Super Bowl XV.

PRM



Rallying behind Plunkett, Oakland posted six consecutive victories to vault back into contention. The most memorable of those wins was the second one, which came on a Monday night in Pittsburgh against the defending-champion Steelers. The Raiders were 10-point underdogs, and ABC had visions of a national-television blowout. Instead, the network's announcers ended up singing Plunkett's praises after he lit up the Steel Curtain for 3 long touchdown passes in a 45-34 victory.

PRM

25 YEARS OF SUPER BOWLS

Game	Date	Site	Attendance	Winner	Loser
I	1-15-67	Los Angeles	61,946	Green Bay (NFL) 35	Kansas City (AFL) 10
II	1-14-68	Miami	75,546	Green Bay (NFL) 33	Oakland (AFL) 10
III	1-12-69	Miami	75,389	New York Jets (AFL) 16	Baltimore (NFL) 7
IV	1-11-70	New Orleans	80,562	Kansas City (AFL) 23	Minnesota (NFL) 7
V	1-17-71	Miami	79,204	Baltimore (AFC) 16	Dallas (NFC) 13
VI	1-16-72	New Orleans	81,023	Dallas (NFC) 24	Miami (AFC) 3
VII	1-14-73	Los Angeles	90,182	Miami (AFC) 14	Washington (NFC) 7
VIII	1-13-74	Houston	71,882	Miami (AFC) 24	Minnesota (NFC) 7
IX	1-12-75	New Orleans	80,997	Pittsburgh (AFC) 16	Minnesota (NFC) 6
X	1-18-76	Miami	80,187	Pittsburgh (AFC) 21	Dallas (NFC) 17
XI	1- 9-77	Pasadena	103,438	Oakland (AFC) 32	Minnesota (NFC) 14
XII	1-15-78	New Orleans	75,583	Dallas (NFC) 27	Denver (AFC) 10
XIII	1-21-79	Miami	79,484	Pittsburgh (AFC) 35	Dallas (NFC) 31
XIV	1-20-80	Pasadena	103,985	Pittsburgh (AFC) 31	Los Angeles (NFC) 19
XV	1-25-81	New Orleans	76,135	Oakland (AFC) 27	Philadelphia (NFC) 10
XVI	1-24-82	Pontiac	81,270	San Francisco (NFC) 26	Cincinnati (AFC) 21
XVII	1-30-83	Pasadena	103,667	Washington (NFC) 27	Miami (AFC) 17
XVIII	1-22-84	Tampa	72,920	Los Angeles Raiders (AFC) 38	Washington (NFC) 9
XIX	1-20-85	Stanford	84,059	San Francisco (NFC) 38	Miami (AFC) 16
XX	1-26-86	New Orleans	73,818	Chicago (NFC) 46	New England (AFC) 10
XXI	1-25-87	Pasadena	101,063	New York Giants (NFC) 39	Denver (AFC) 20
XXII	1-31-88	San Diego	73,302	Washington (NFC) 42	Denver (AFC) 10
XXIII	1-22-89	Miami	75,129	San Francisco (NFC) 20	Cincinnati (AFC) 16
XXIV	1-28-90	New Orleans	72,919	San Francisco (NFC) 55	Denver (AFC) 10
XXV	1-27-91	Tampa	73,813	New York Giants (NFC) 20	Buffalo (AFC) 19

Oakland went on to finish 11-5 and earn a wild-card playoff spot. Plunkett's numbers were not impressive—he completed barely 50 percent of his passes and ranked seventeenth in the NFL in passer rating—but he just kept winning.

Still, the media was more interested in the Raiders for their off-the-field court battles than for their on-the-field heroics. They were longshots, at best, and their run had to end soon. Every week that figured to be the case...and every week the Raiders, thanks to their defense and Plunkett's resourcefulness, confounded their opponents.

First up in the AFC playoffs was a wild-card meeting with Stabler and the Oilers. The defense did its part, using blind-side blitzes to record 7 sacks of Stabler, and Plunkett connected on a pair of deep passes in a 27-7 victory.

The reward was a trip to frigid Cleveland for one of the coldest games in NFL history. But it was the hometown Browns who had trouble with the cold, completing only 13 of 40 passes, while Plunkett directed the Raiders on two long scoring drives in a 14-12 surprise of the Browns. Mike Davis made a game-saving end-zone interception of an ill-timed pass by Brian Sipe in the fourth quarter.

Then came the AFC Championship Game in San Diego. The Chargers were most people's choice to go to the Super Bowl. Quarterback Dan Fouts led a record-setting passing attack that made San Diego one of the top teams in the NFL. While the Chargers sported a space-age offense, the Raiders were so old-fashioned that they still let their quarterback call the plays.

With Plunkett calling a masterful game, Oakland quickly jumped out to a 28-7 lead. By the third quarter, however, San Diego had pulled within 28-24 and appeared poised to take the lead. Given yet another chance to fall flat on their faces, the Raiders refused to fold. Plunkett and the offense produced three time-consuming drives. The first two drives netted field goals for a 34-24 lead, which the Chargers answered with a three-pointer of their own to make it 34-27. The Raiders' final drive sealed the result as Plunkett and the Raiders ran off the final 6:43 to secure a 34-27 victory and a trip to New Orleans.

Before Super Bowl XV, the media finally had the Raiders pegged as a silver-and-black Cinderella, and Plunkett had been recognized as a great comeback story. In the game that followed, a 27-10 rout of the Philadelphia Eagles, Plunkett passed for 3 touchdowns, including a Super Bowl-record 80-yard throw to Kenny King, and was voted the game's most valuable player.

He had gone from football's scrap heap to the top of its universe, but Plunkett remained gracious.

"Do I feel vindicated? No, not really. Vindication implies bitterness, and I don't feel bitterness toward anybody," Plunkett said after Super Bowl XV. "I'm not playing any better now than I ever was. I'm [just] playing with better people."

Plunkett's comeback did not end there. He went on to play six more years, leading the Los Angeles Raiders to another Super Bowl title in 1984.

49ERS 1981

An Improved Secondary Was Primary Difference

In just one season, rookie head coach Bill Walsh transformed the San Francisco 49ers from a dull, uninspired 2-14 team into an entertaining, pass-happy 2-14 team. But a 2-14 team, nevertheless.

That was 1979. A year later, the 49ers improved to 6-10 when they let second-year quarterback Joe Montana play a little more.

Still, San Francisco regressed defensively, falling to twenty-seventh in the NFL in both passing defense and total defense. The 49ers were giving up points so fast that even their prolific offensive powerhouse couldn't keep pace.

Coaching geniuses know that if your team consistently gives up more points than it scores, you're not only not a coaching genius, you're usually unemployed.

So, Walsh set out to rectify the situation, and he did it with alarming quickness—drafting, signing, and trading

When free safety Dwight Hicks (22) was joined by three talented rookies—cornerbacks Ronnie Lott (42) and Eric Wright (21) and strong safety Carlton Williamson (27)—the puzzle began to fill in.

Michael Zagaris

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TURNING POINTS

for key players. The influx of new talent turned the 49ers' defense into one of the NFL's best in 1981 and provided the impetus for San Francisco's drive to victory in Super Bowl XVI.

First was the draft.

"We went into the 1981 draft knowing exactly what we needed," said Walsh.

That wasn't a state secret. San Francisco had allowed an astounding 234.4 passing yards per game in 1980, and defensive backs were the priority. What was surprising, however, was that the 49ers completely restocked their secondary, taking defensive backs with four of their first five draft selections.

And what do they say about the best-laid plans? Walsh knew he wanted to revamp his secondary, and he figured he'd start with highly touted safety Kenny Easley of UCLA. Easley figured to be available when San Francisco's pick, the eighth overall, came up, especially because Easley wanted to play for the 49ers, so much so that his agent sent letters out to the teams selecting ahead of the 49ers warning them not to draft him or risk wasting a choice.

Seattle ignored the bluff. Easley went on to enjoy a fine career with the Seahawks, but that left USC's Ronnie Lott for San Francisco to take with the eighth choice in the first round.

In the second round, the 49ers had two picks, the last of which went for Eric Wright of Missouri. Wright came highly recommended by then-assistant coach George Seifert and, like Lott, had been a safety in college. But San Francisco wanted both of them to play cornerback.

One safety spot already was manned by Dwight Hicks, who signed late in the 1979 season as he was about to embark on a career as a manager at a health food store in Michigan. To fill the other spot, the 49ers selected Carlton Williamson of Pittsburgh in the third round. Their next pick was Lynn Thomas, Williamson's teammate at Pittsburgh, who would become the Nickel back.

With four of its first five picks in the draft, San Francisco gave its secondary a complete facelift. Things were starting to fall into place.

"During [my first] two years, I felt that the team was a puzzle I was trying to put together," Walsh said, "but half the pieces were missing. Those pieces were on defense. They just weren't there."

Now the 49ers were a young team on defense. To give them direction, Walsh shopped for free agents. He signed veteran linebacker Jack (Hacksaw) Reynolds, who had been released by the Rams even though he was only one year removed from a Pro Bowl appearance.

"A lot of us thought that was a mistake," said former team vice president John Ralston. "We figured we were building with youth, and what did we need with a thirty-four-year-old linebacker?"

What they needed was the experience and leadership.

"I've always been very motivated," Reynolds said after his playing days ended. "Most players aren't. It really burns me up to see players who don't work hard to be the best."

Now the 49ers were a young team with intensity and desire on defense. But there still was one important piece missing. And, for that, Walsh acquired defensive end Fred Dean from the San Diego Chargers.

Dean gave San Francisco the pass rusher and big-play specialist it had lacked. Despite playing only the final 11 games of the regular season, Dean was dominant enough to be named NFC defensive player of the year.

"Defensive ends like Fred Dean," said tackle Keith Fahnhorst, "well, there just

Vernon Biever

The 49ers' goal-line stand in Super Bowl XVI (above) was one of the most memorable defensive displays in NFL history.

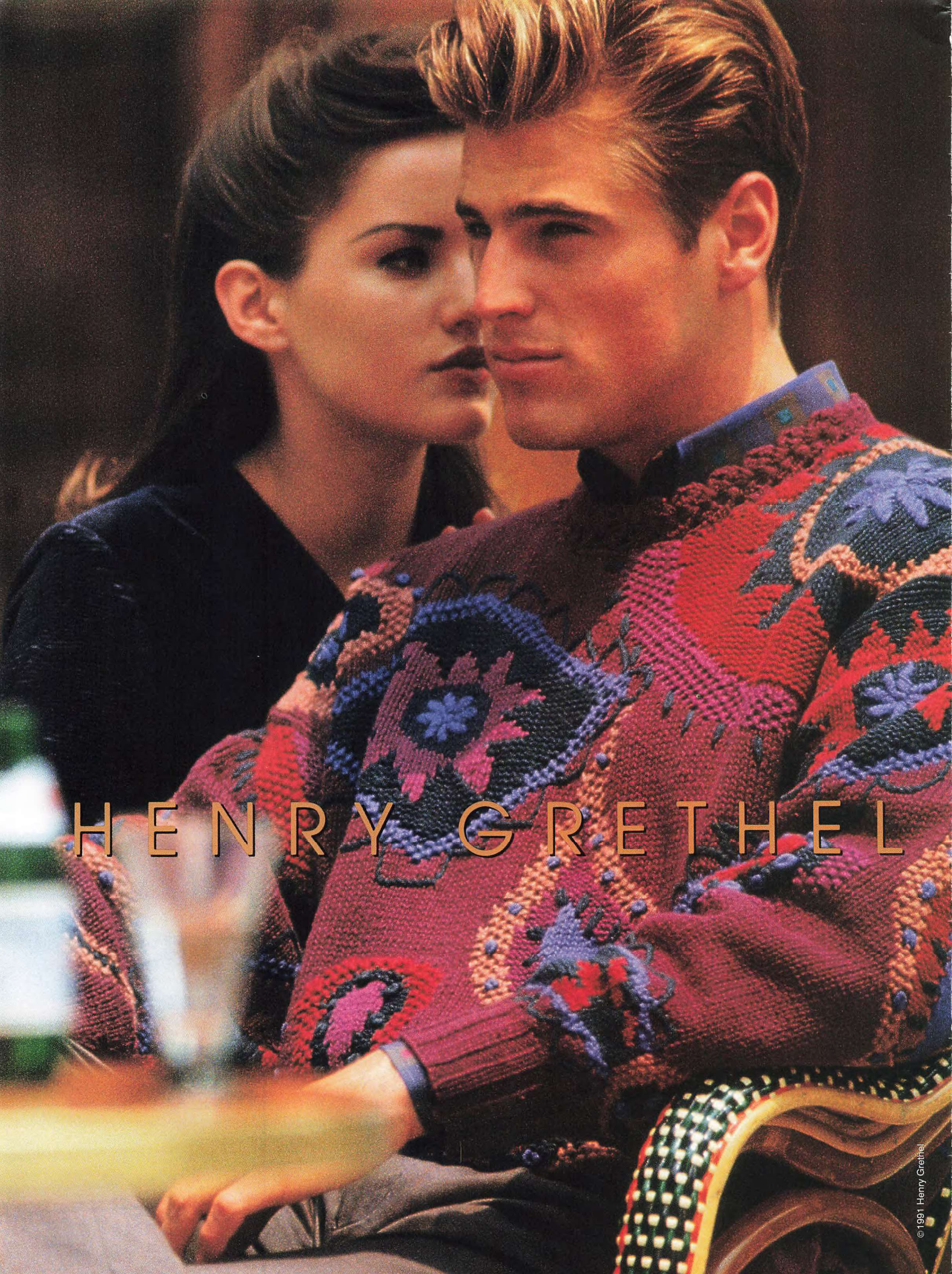
PRM

Signing defensive end Fred Dean after five games gave San Francisco the dominant pass rusher it had lacked, easing the pressure on the secondary.

BEST OF THE BEST

Super Bowl Most Valuable Players

Super Bowl	Player, Team	Statistics
I	QB Bart Starr, Green Bay	16 of 23 for 250 yards, 2 TDs
II	QB Bart Starr, Green Bay	13 of 24 for 202 yards, 1 TD
III	QB Joe Namath, New York Jets	17 of 28 for 206 yards
IV	QB Len Dawson, Kansas City	12 of 17 for 142 yards, 1 TD
V	LB Chuck Howley, Dallas	2 interceptions for 22 yards
VI	QB Roger Staubach, Dallas	12 of 19 for 119 yards, 2 TDs
VII	S Jake Scott, Miami	2 interceptions for 63 yards
VIII	RB Larry Csonka, Miami	33 attempts for 145 yards, 2 TDs
IX	RB Franco Harris, Pittsburgh	34 attempts for 158 yards, 1 TD
X	WR Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh	4 receptions for 161 yards, 1 TD
XI	WR Fred Biletnikoff, Oakland	4 receptions for 79 yards
XII	DE Harvey Martin & DT Randy White, Cowboys	Combined for 7 tackles and 3 sacks
XIII	QB Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh	17 of 30 for 318 yards, 4 TDs
XIV	QB Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh	14 of 21 for 309 yards, 2 TDs
XV	QB Jim Plunkett, Oakland	13 of 21 for 261 yards, 3 TDs
XVI	QB Joe Montana, San Francisco	14 of 22 for 157 yards, 1 TD
XVII	RB John Riggins, Washington	38 attempts for 166 yards, 1 TD
XVIII	RB Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders	20 attempts for 191 yards, 2 TDs
XIX	QB Joe Montana, San Francisco	24 of 35 for 331 yards, 3 TDs
XX	DE Richard Dent, Chicago	1.5 sacks, 2 forced fumbles, 1 pass defensed
XXI	QB Phil Simms, N.Y. Giants	22 of 25 for 268 yards, 3 TDs
XXII	QB Doug Williams, Washington	18 of 29 for 340 yards, 4 TDs
XXIII	WR Jerry Rice, San Francisco	11 receptions for 215 yards, 1 TD
XXIV	QB Joe Montana, San Francisco	22 of 29 for 297 yards, 5 TDs
XXV	RB Ottis Anderson, New York Giants	21 attempts for 102 yards, 1 TD



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aren't any like that around."

Now the 49ers were complete on defense. They improved to second in the league overall—an astounding jump from twenty-seventh—and were third against the pass.

After a 2-2 start, San Francisco, which had won only 2 of its previous 28 road games, earned a watershed victory in Washington. Dwight Hicks returned a fumble 80 yards for a touchdown and an interception 32 yards for a score as the 49ers built a 30-3 lead and coasted to a 30-17 victory.

Dean joined the team a week later, and Lott returned an interception for a touchdown in a 45-14 rout of the Cowboys, then the NFC's dominant team. The pieces of the puzzle were fitting together.

Reynolds led the 49ers with 117 tackles. Dean had 12 sacks. Hicks intercepted 9 passes, and Lott returned 3 of his 7 thefts for touchdowns. Williamson (4) and Wright (3) combined for 7 more interceptions.

The crowning achievement came in Super Bowl XVI. The 49ers' once-sorry defense turned in the greatest goal-line stand in the history of the NFL's biggest game, effectively stemming the tide of Cincinnati's momentum and enabling the 49ers to defeat the Bengals 26-21. The fourth-down stop of Pete Johnson just inches short of the end zone was credited to Reynolds.

Walsh was the coach of the year. He was a certified genius. Or at least a master at putting together a difficult puzzle.

Al Messerschmidt

REDSKINS 1982

When He Got the Ball, Riggins Didn't Fumble

Every morning at the mine you could see him arrive,

He stood six-foot-six and weighed two-forty-five.

Kind of broad at the shoulder and narrow at the hip,

And everybody knew you didn't give no lip to Big John.

"BIG JOHN," JIMMY DEAN
Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. ©1961. Renewed 1989.

NFL Photos

John Riggins was born to carry a football.

Nicknamed "Diesel," the 6-2, 240-pound Washington Redskins running back was an intimidating force. He didn't run around opponents; he ran through them.

But entering the 1982 season he hadn't made much noise since 1979, when he rushed for 1,153 yards.

Riggins missed the entire 1980 season because of a contract dispute, and he struggled to fit into head coach Joe Gibbs's offensive system in 1981.

Riggins was 33 years old, out of shape, and injured for most of the 1982 regular season, finishing with the third-lowest rushing-yardage total (553) of his career.

Meanwhile, Redskins quarterback Joe Theismann was putting together a brilliant season that helped Washington tie for the NFL's best regular-season mark (8-1).

The strike-shortened nine-game schedule probably prevented Theismann from posting the best season of his career. He completed a career-high 63.9 percent of his passes, had a 91.3 passer rating, and was on a pace to finish a full 16-game season with more than 3,600 passing yards, 24 touchdowns, and a personal-record 287 completions.

In crucial games against division-rival Philadelphia, Theismann completed 28 of 39 passes for 382 yards and 3 touchdowns in a 37-34 triumph, and 14 of 28 passes for 259 yards and 1 touchdown in a 13-9 victory.

Why then would Gibbs, a firm believer in the passing offense, change his offensive philosophy in the playoffs to favor Riggins?

The answer was simple.

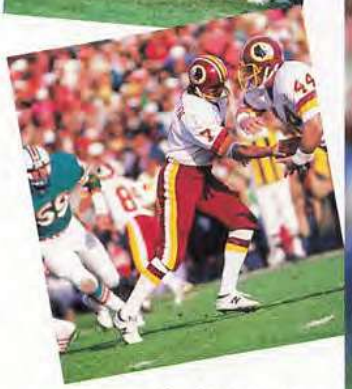
"Power football," said Redskins guard Russ Grimm after Riggins rushed for 136 yards against Tampa Bay before the 57-day players' strike had taken effect.

"When you have a 235-pound fullback, what do you think you're going to do? You give him the ball, and see how many he can get. And if he gets some, you give it to him again."

In the postseason, there wasn't a more efficient running back. Riggins set or tied NFL playoff records for most attempts in a game (38), career 100-yard games (6), and

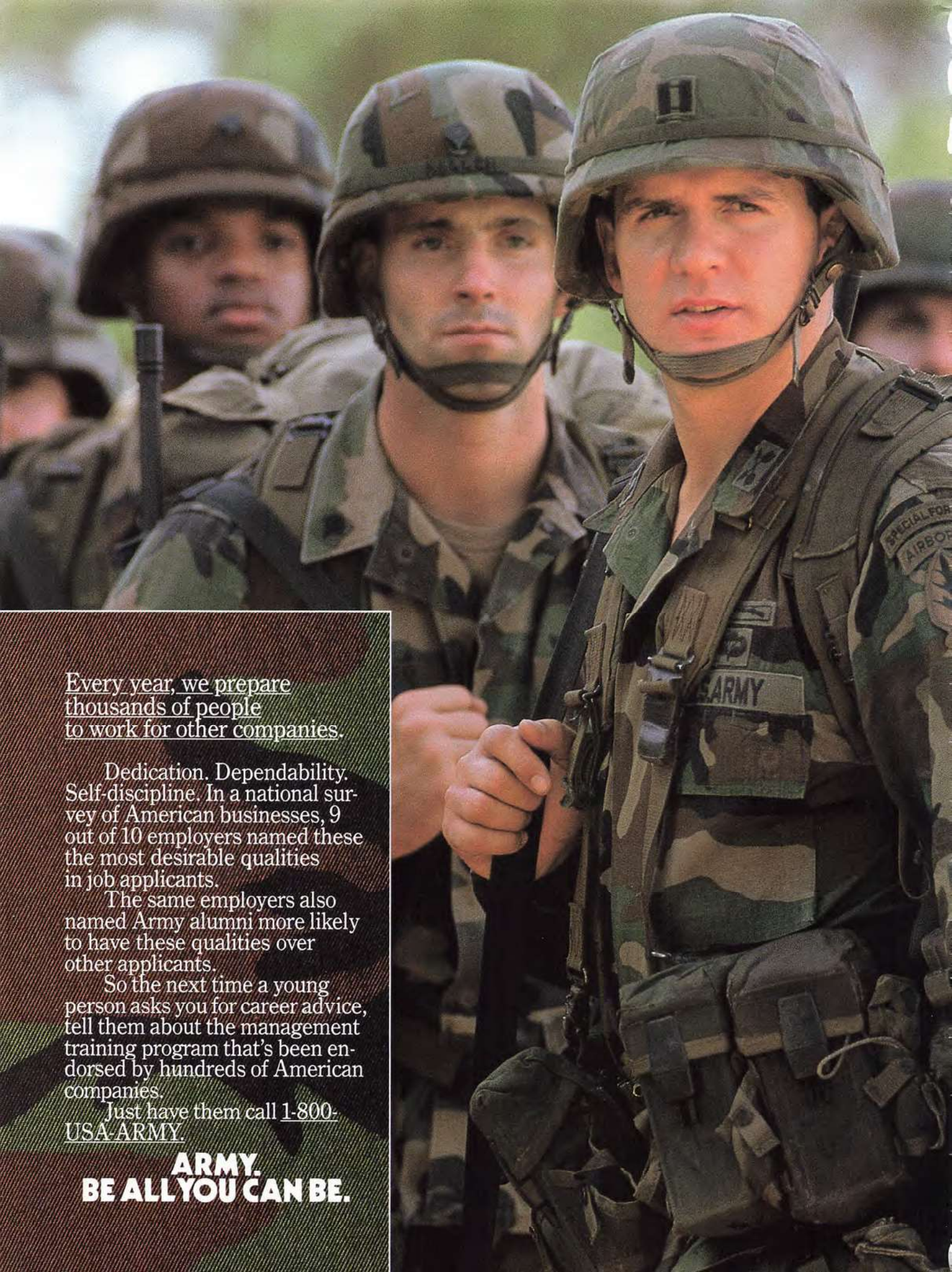
Malcolm Emmons

Nate Fine



Riggins's 1982 postseason barrel ride included big games against (from top to bottom) Detroit, Minnesota, Dallas in the NFC championship, and Miami in Super Bowl XVII. All told, the punishing fullback gained 610 yards in the four games.

Allen's Studio



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THE TELEVISION STORY

Super Bowl	Network	Announcers	Rating	Share
I	CBS, NBC	CBS-Ray Scott and Jack Whitaker (play-by-play), Frank Gifford (analyst); NBC-Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Paul Christman (analyst)	40.8	NA
II	CBS	Ray Scott (play-by-play), Jack Kemp and Pat Summerall (analysts)	36.8	68%
III	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Al DeRogatis and Kyle Rote (analysts)	36.0	70%
IV	CBS	Jack Buck (play-by-play), Frank Gifford and Pat Summerall (analysts)	39.4	69%
V	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Kyle Rote (analyst)	39.9	75%
VI	CBS	Ray Scott (play-by-play), Pat Summerall (analyst)	44.2	74%
VII	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Al DeRogatis (analyst)	42.7	72%
VIII	CBS	Ray Scott (play-by-play), Bart Starr and Pat Summerall (analysts)	41.6	73%
IX	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Al DeRogatis and Don Meredith (analysts)	42.4	72%
X	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), Tom Brookshier (analyst)	42.3	78%
XI	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), Don Meredith (analyst)	44.4	73%
XII	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), Tom Brookshier (analyst)	47.2	67%
XIII	NBC	Curt Gowdy (play-by-play), John Brodie and Merlin Olsen (analysts)	47.1	74%
XIV	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), Tom Brookshier (analyst)	46.3	67%
XV	NBC	Dick Enberg (play-by-play), Merlin Olsen (analyst)	44.4	63%
XVI	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), John Madden (analyst)	49.1	73%
XVII	NBC	Dick Enberg (play-by-play), Merlin Olsen (analyst)	48.6	69%
XVIII	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), John Madden (analyst)	46.4	71%
XIX	ABC	Frank Gifford (play-by-play), Don Meredith and Joe Theismann (analysts)	46.4	63%
XX	NBC	Dick Enberg (play-by-play), Bob Griese and Merlin Olsen (analysts)	48.3	70%
XXI	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), John Madden (analyst)	45.8	66%
XXII	ABC	Al Michaels (play-by-play), Dan Dierdorf and Frank Gifford (analysts)	41.9	62%
XXIII	NBC	Dick Enberg (play-by-play), Merlin Olsen (analyst)	43.5	68%
XXIV	CBS	Pat Summerall (play-by-play), John Madden (analyst)	39.0	63%
XXV	ABC	Al Michaels (play-by-play), Dan Dierdorf and Frank Gifford (analysts)	41.9	63%

Rating is the number of households with televisions tuned in to some or all of the telecast. Share is the percentage of households using televisions during the telecast that tuned in to the game. For example, of the households that had their televisions on during Super Bowl XXIV, 63 percent were tuned in to the game. The top 10 televised sports events, based on ratings, all are Super Bowls.

Source: A.C. Nielsen

consecutive 100-yard games (6).

In a total of nine postseason games in his career, Riggins carried the ball 251 times for 996 yards—third on the NFL's all-time list. His 12 postseason rushing touchdowns rank second.

Yet, he had only one 100-yard game to his credit in 1982 and had missed both games preceding the playoffs.

Mitchell Reibel

Quarterback Joe Theismann, who had carried Washington for most of the season, threw less often—but just as efficiently—as Riggins emerged.

Insignificant factors to Riggins.

"I'm getting down the road," Riggins told Gibbs at the time. "I don't have many of these left. I've been out two weeks, and I'm ready. Give me the ball."

Riggins didn't let Gibbs or his teammates down, and started his incredible run toward legendary status by carrying the ball 25 times for 119 yards as Washington crushed Detroit 31-7 in the Redskins' first playoff game.

Riggins increased his level of performance in the next game against Minnesota—a 21-7 Redskins victory.

The Vikings couldn't stop Riggins. He carried the ball 37 times for 185 yards and 1 touchdown.

Despite an often strained relationship with the fans and the press, Riggins stopped and bowed to the fans at RFK Stadium as he left the game. They gave him a rousing ovation.

In the NFC Championship Game against Dallas, Riggins carried the ball 36 times for 140 yards and 2 touchdowns as the Redskins avenged a 24-10 regular-season loss, winning 31-17.

Super Bowl XVII was another showcase for Riggins—a Super Bowl-record 38 carries for 166 yards and 1 touchdown.

The game's most valuable player, he hammered off tackle for a 43-yard touchdown run on fourth-and-inches on the key play of the game. The score gave Washington a 20-17 lead over Miami, and the Redskins went on to win the franchise's first Super Bowl 27-17.

Said Riggins afterward, "At least for tonight, Ron's [Reagan] the President, but I'm the king."

Nobody seemed to know where John called home,
He just drifted into town and stayed all alone.
He didn't say much, a-kinda quiet and shy,
And if you spoke at all, you just said, 'Hi' to Big John.

JIMMY DEAN

GIANTS 1986

A Win in San Francisco Convinced Any Doubters

Somewhere between the time that tight end Mark Bavaro caught a simple 9-yard pass over the middle against the 49ers in a nationally televised Monday night game in 1986 and the time that he finished dragging tacklers another 22 yards, the football world began to take the New York Giants seriously.

It's not as if New York took the league or the public totally by surprise. After all, the Giants entered that game with a 10-2 record and a host of headliners, including quarterback Phil Simms, linebacker Lawrence Taylor, and running back Joe Morris.

Still, New York trailed first-place Washington by a half-game in the NFC Eastern Division and was playing San Francisco, which had won two of the previous five Super Bowls and seemed primed for another playoff run.

Besides, media exposure in the Big Apple always makes everyone seem a little bigger and a little better than they really are, and maybe now was the time to show that the Gi-

TURNING POINTS

ants weren't all they were cracked up to be.

Sure, 10-2 is 10-2, but how good is it when only three of those victories come against teams that finished with winning records? And when eight of the victories against losing teams came by a touchdown or less?

The Giants had walked a tightrope to that point in the season. They were coming off a 19-16 victory over Denver, settled when Raul Allegre kicked a 34-yard field goal with six seconds remaining. The week before, Allegre was successful from 33 yards in the final 12 seconds for a 22-20 triumph over the Vikings. Before that, New York had held on for three-point victories over both the Eagles and Cowboys (17-14 each time).

"We can't keep winning this way," said running back Maurice Carthon, after the Giants nearly let a big lead against the Eagles slip away in the fourth quarter.

Michael Zagaris

Tight end Mark Bavaro (89, above) tormented the 49ers' esteemed secondary all day, catching 7 passes from Phil Simms.

Jim Turner

Raul Allegre's field goals were the difference in a number of the Giants' regular-season victories in 1986.

So that Monday night in San Francisco, the Giants could be exposed as the Super Bowl charlatans they were, when they finally could get their comeuppance against a good team.

For one half at least, anyone who subscribed to that theory could sit back on the couch in front of the television set and say, "I told you so."

By halftime, the 49ers had rolled to a 17-0 advantage. And they'd done it convincingly, shutting down New York's impressive running game.

"They manhandled us up front," Simms said.

Morris, who entered the game with more than 1,100 yards rushing en route to a club-record 1,516, was held to only 2 yards on 6 carries. The 49ers, beating the Giants at their own game, maintained possession for more than 19 of the game's first 30 minutes and scored on an 11-yard pass from Joe Montana to Jerry Rice, a 1-yard run by Rice, and a field goal by Ray Wersching.

"We haven't been out of any games since 1984," head coach Bill Parcells said afterward, "although we were almost out of this one."

Before things could get any worse, however, Bavaro took matters into his own hands. With the ball on San Francisco's 49-yard line on the Giants' initial possession of the second half, Bavaro caught a pass at the 41 and turned upfield. 49ers safety Ronnie Lott grabbed hold and hung on, but he couldn't bring Bavaro down.

Linebacker Keena Turner gave it a shot, coming in from the left side. Eventually it took five 49ers to drag him down. By that time, Bavaro had a first down at the 18.

By that time, the Giants had renewed life.

"That play totally ignited us," Parcells said.

Two plays later, Morris caught a 17-yard touchdown pass from Simms.

On its next drive, New York apparently was stopped on its own 49. But on fourth-and-2, Parcells elected to go for the first down. Morris, who finished the night with a season-low 14 rushing yards, burst through a hole for 17. The next play was a 34-yard touchdown pass from Simms to Stacy Robinson, and the score was 17-14.

Still in the third quarter, the Giants got the ball back. A 49-yard pass to Robinson set up Ottis Anderson's 1-yard touchdown run, and New York made the 21-17 advantage stand up.

Simms, a good player on his way to being great, completed 27 of 38 passes for 388 yards and directed the three consecutive scoring drives that took only a combined 15 plays and less than eight minutes of playing time. Robinson, just off injured reserve, caught 5 passes for 116 yards.

"It shows what a little intensity can do," said Parcells. "My guys are tough. They don't quit."

Just as important, the Giants knew they could beat anybody, and they didn't have to wait for a last-second field goal to do it.

The rest was easy. In what amounted to a showdown for the division title, New York handled Washington with stunning ease at RFK Stadium, intercepting 6 passes on the way to a 24-14 victory in a game that wasn't as close as the score indicated. Then came 27-7 and 55-24 routs of the Cardinals and Packers to close the season.

Once in the playoffs, the sublime turned to the ridiculous. The Giants first disposed of the 49ers 49-3, then the Redskins 17-0, allowing fewer than 200 total yards in each game and never being seriously threatened.

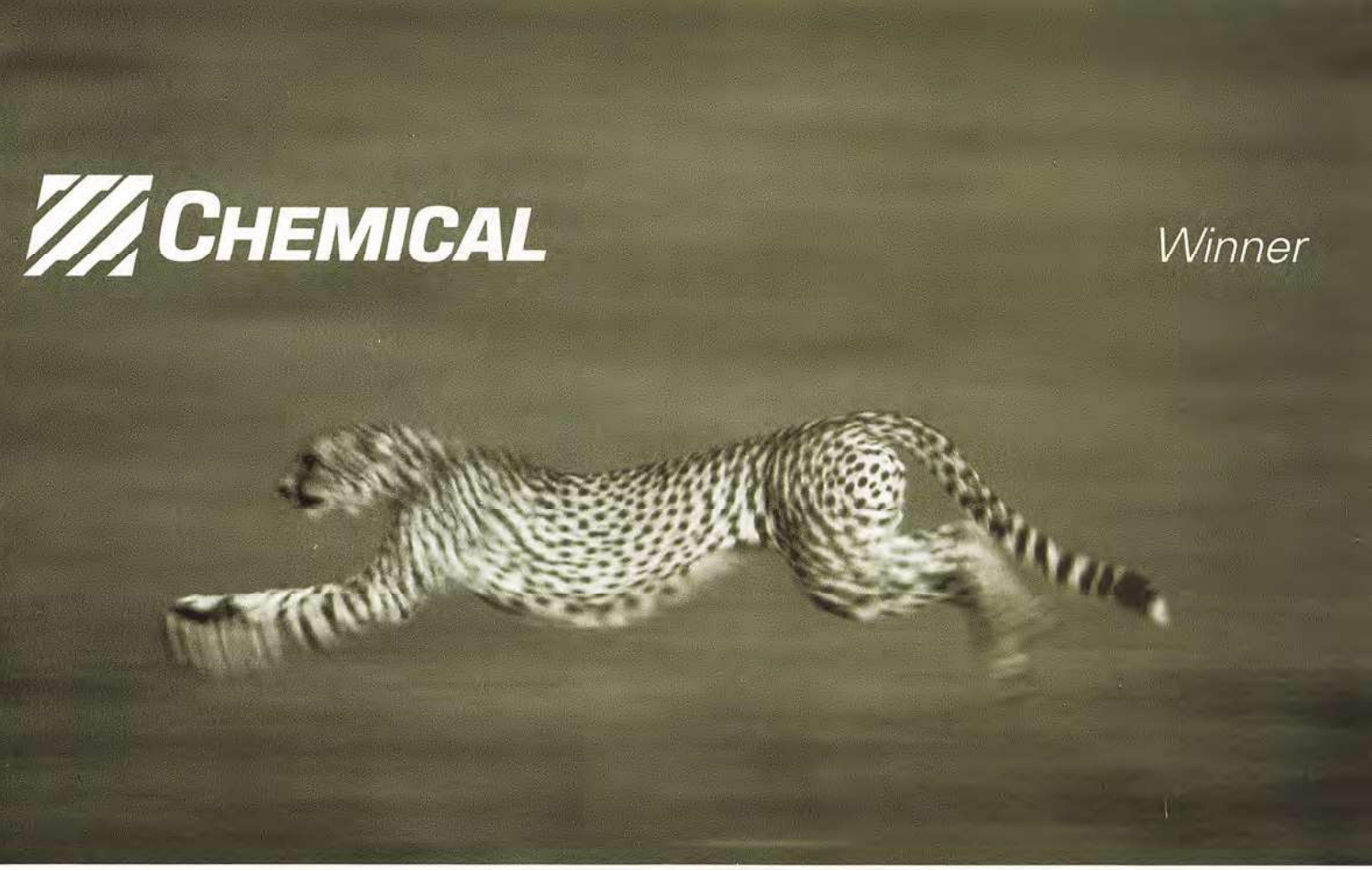
Super Bowl XXI against the Broncos was only slightly more difficult. New York actually trailed 10-9 at halftime, a fact hard to comprehend considering the one-sidedness of the second half. The Giants scored 24 unanswered points and built a 33-10 lead on the way to a 39-20 victory.

Simms, enjoying one of the finest days any quarterback ever has had, completed 22 of 25 passes for 268 yards and 3 touchdowns.

Parcells recalled the 30 years of frustration since the Giants' last championship.

"We buried the ghosts tonight," he said.

That may be true. But it was Mark Bavaro who put the first shovel in the dirt nearly two months earlier. ■



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Super THEN Bowl

SUPER BOWL RINGS

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Super Bowl III

Super Bowl IV

Super Bowl V

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Super Bowl VII

Super Bowl VIII

Super Bowl IX

Super Bowl X

Super Bowl XI

Super Bowl XII

Super Bowl XIII

Super Bowl XIV

Super Bowl XV

Super Bowl XVI

Super Bowl XVII

Super Bowl XVIII

Super Bowl XIX

Super Bowl XX

Super Bowl XXI

Super Bowl XXII

Super Bowl XXIII

Super Bowl XXIV

TRIBUTE TO A GIANT VICTORY

Perhaps more than any other sport, football is a team game, one that requires the efforts of every player and coach working in unison toward a common goal.

The Vince Lombardi Trophy is the ultimate symbol of team achievement. But lest anyone forget the individual effort that goes into the makeup of a Super Bowl champion, each member of the championship team—including players, coaches, trainers, equipment managers, and administrative personnel—is awarded a Super Bowl ring.

The Super Bowl XXV-champion New York Giants were presented with their Super Bowl rings at a private ceremony following a minicamp for veterans last May. L.G. Balfour Company of Attleboro, Massachusetts, which also designed four of the previous 24 rings, designed and manufactured the XXV model.

Fittingly, the Giants' Super Bowl XXV ring features two marquis-cut diamonds on the facing panel to signify each of the franchise's two Super Bowl victories. Sixteen diamonds, one for each of the Giants' victories during the regular and postseason, surround the larger diamonds (total carats: more than 1.5). The player's name and number and the Giants' logo are on one side; the Super Bowl XXV logo, the final score, footballs commemorating triumphs in XXI and XXV, and the American flag are on the other.

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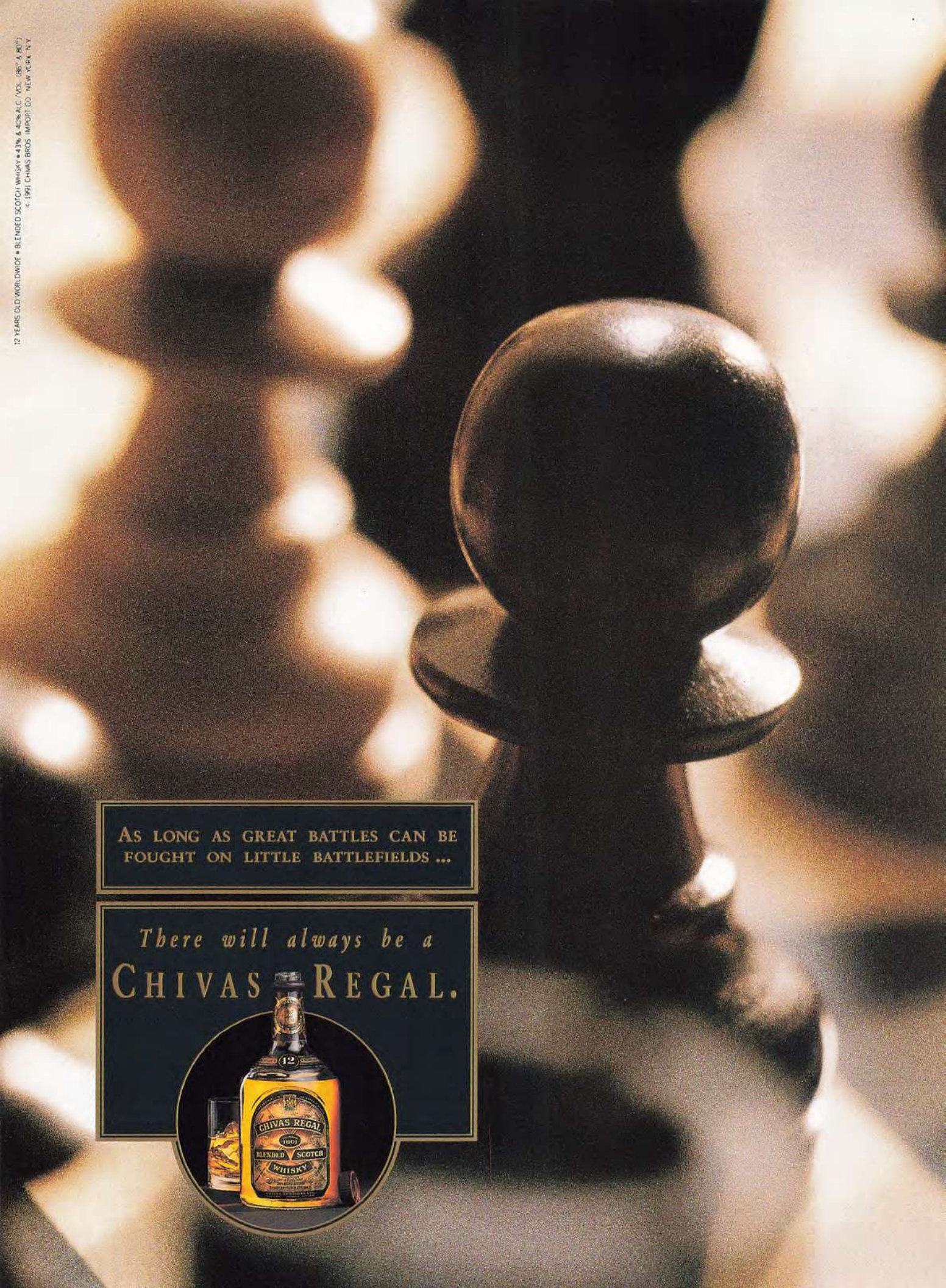

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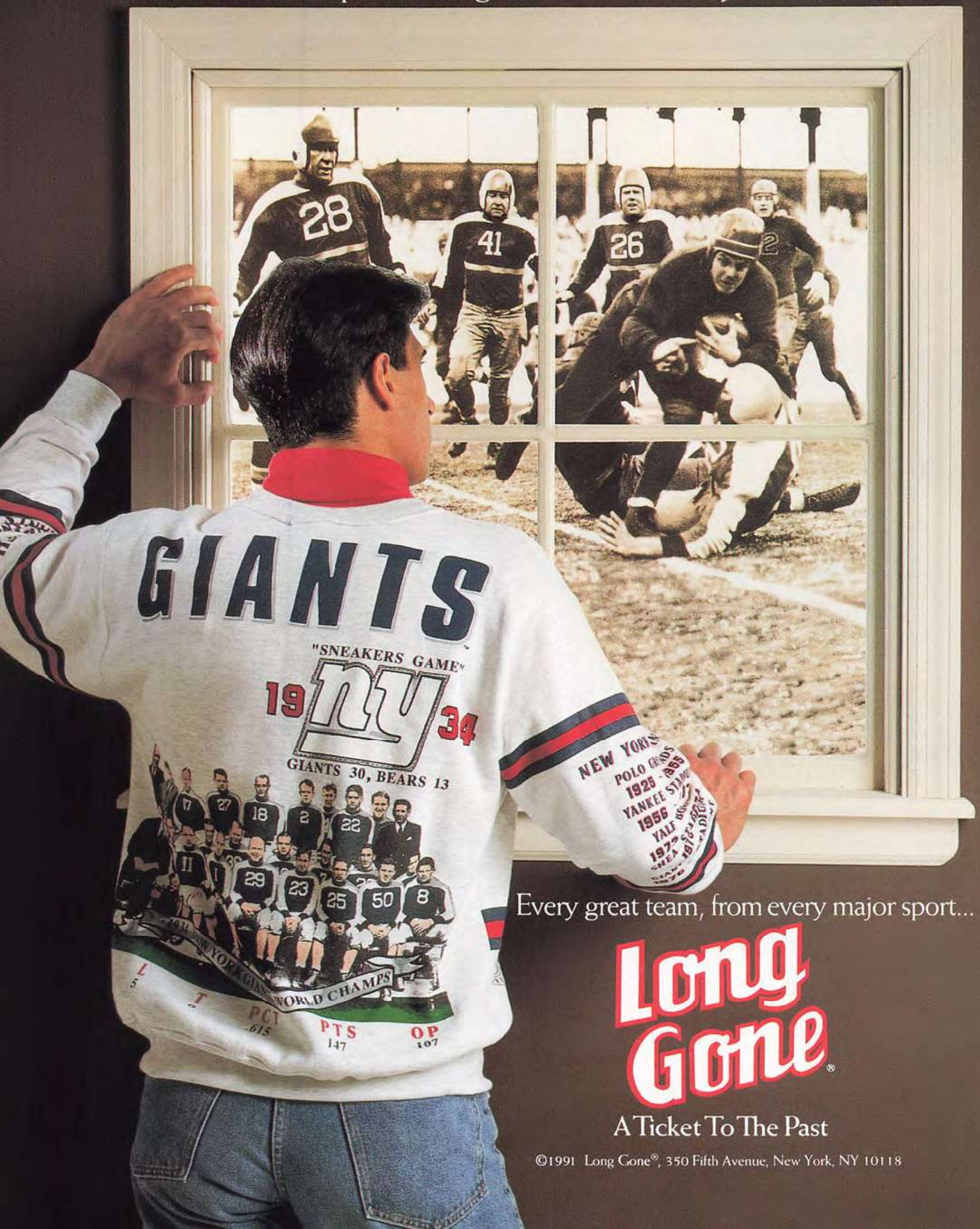

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THE WORLD LEAGUE

Three Teams in Europe, One in Canada, Six in U.S. Embark on Second Season

Last June, quarterback Stan Gelbaugh was in historic Wembley Stadium in London, directing the Monarchs to a 21-0 victory over the Barcelona Dragons in the inaugural World Bowl.

That capped a dramatic season for Gelbaugh, who was named the World League's offensive most valuable player. But he wasn't finished in 1991.

Five months later, Gelbaugh was in Candlestick Park in San Francisco, making his first NFL start as a member of the Phoenix Cardinals. Only 49ers safety Todd Bowles kept him from completing the script to a Cinderella year by knocking down his potential game-winning touchdown pass in the end zone in the final minute.

Still, Gelbaugh, who had been passed over by NFL teams before, got another life in the World League.

Other players got the attention of NFL scouts in the World League, too. Montreal Machine cornerback Richard Shelton was signed by the Pittsburgh Steelers, and finished the 1991 season with 3 interceptions in a victory over Cleveland—including 1 he returned for a touchdown and 1 that stopped a Browns' drive late in the fourth quarter.

Shelton's teammate at Montreal, Tracy Simien, stepped into the Kansas City Chiefs' starting lineup at inside linebacker. Barcelona's Louis Aguiar punted for the New York Jets. Charlie Baumann of the Orlando Thunder was called in to replace injured kickers in Miami and New England. The Machine's Keith Jennings was a tight end for the Chicago Bears.

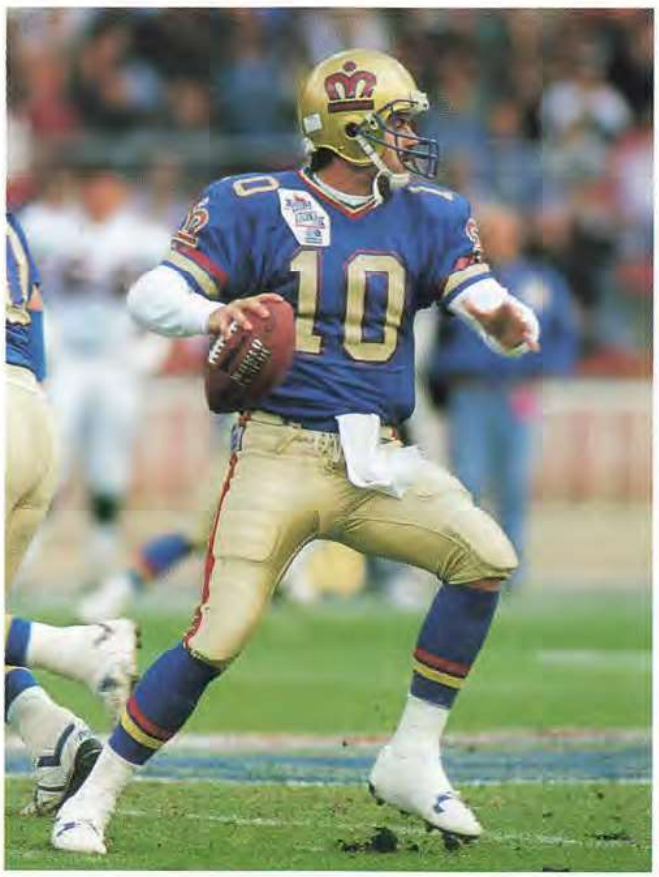
But, while veterans may get a second chance and young players have the opportunity to prove themselves, the World League is much more than a potential steppingstone to the NFL. In fact, ask football-crazed fans in London, Barcelona, or Frankfurt, and they'll tell you it doesn't matter who's coming or going to the NFL. They're there for the excitement of American football.

And they were there last spring, when an average of 26,274 fans witnessed each World League game, including an average of 41,586 for each of three postseason games.

In Europe, British fans especially embraced their team, with the Monarchs drawing a league-high average of 40,481 during the regular season, then attracting 61,108 for the World Bowl. In Frankfurt, the Galaxy's regular-season finale drew 51,653.

This spring, the World League enters its second season, with nine teams returning (New York/New Jersey, San Antonio, Birmingham and Sacramento also have franchises), and one new team, the Ohio Glory (which will play in Columbus).

ABC and the USA cable network will continue to televise games throughout the U.S.



Al Messerschmidt

London quarterback Stan Gelbaugh (10) was named the World League offensive MVP and led the Monarchs to a victory over the Barcelona Dragons before more than 61,000 enthusiastic fans (above) at London's Wembley Stadium.

Al Messerschmidt

1992 SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Saturday, March 21
- Frankfurt at Barcelona, TBA
- Birmingham at Sacramento, 5 P.M. (USA)

Sunday, March 22
- Ohio at Orlando, 1 P.M. (ABC)
- Montreal at San Antonio, 3 P.M.
- NY/NJ at London, 6 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 2

Saturday, March 28
- NY/NJ at Barcelona, TBA
- Frankfurt at London, TBA
- Orlando at Montreal, 8 P.M. (USA)

Sunday, March 29
- San Antonio at Birmingham, Noon (ABC)
- Sacramento at Ohio, 1 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 3

Saturday, April 4
- London at Barcelona, TBA
- *Montreal at Sacramento, TBA
- San Antonio at NY/NJ, 8 P.M. (USA)

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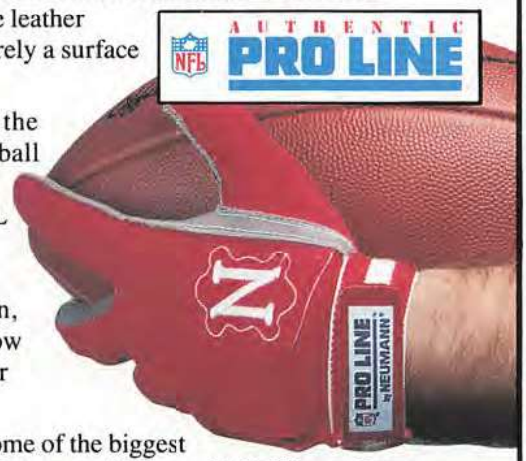

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WLAF

Sunday, April 5
Birmingham at Frankfurt, 7 P.M. (ABC)
Orlando at Ohio, 1 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 4
Saturday, April 11
Birmingham at London, TBA
Barcelona at Frankfurt, TBA
San Antonio at Sacramento, 5 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, April 12
NY/NJ at Orlando, 1 P.M. (ABC)
Ohio at Montreal, 1 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 5
Saturday, April 18
Barcelona at London, TBA
Sacramento at Birmingham, 7 P.M. (USA)
Frankfurt at NY/NJ, 8 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, April 19
Ohio at San Antonio, Noon (ABC)
Montreal at Orlando, 1 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 6
Saturday, April 25
Orlando at Frankfurt, TBA
Birmingham at San Antonio, 7 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, April 26
*Ohio at Barcelona, TBA
Sacramento at London, 6 P.M. (ABC)
NY/NJ at Montreal, 1 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 7
Saturday, May 2
Barcelona at Birmingham, 7 P.M. (USA)
Frankfurt at Ohio, 8 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, May 3
Orlando at San Antonio, Noon (ABC)
London at NY/NJ, 1 P.M. (ABC)
Sacramento at Montreal, TBA

WEEK 8
Saturday, May 9
Frankfurt at Sacramento, 5 P.M. (USA)
London at Orlando, 8 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, May 10
NY/NJ at Ohio, 1 P.M. (ABC)
San Antonio at Barcelona, 7 P.M. (ABC)
*Montreal at Birmingham, TBA

WEEK 9
Saturday, May 16
Ohio at Sacramento, 5 P.M. (USA)
Barcelona at NY/NJ, 8 P.M. (USA)
Sunday, May 17
Orlando at Birmingham, Noon (ABC)
London at Montreal, TBA
San Antonio at Frankfurt, 7 P.M. (ABC)

WEEK 10
Saturday, May 23
London at Frankfurt, TBA
Montreal at NY/NJ, 1 P.M. (ABC)
Barcelona at Orlando, 1 P.M. (ABC)
Sacramento at San Antonio, 7 P.M. (USA)
Birmingham at Ohio, 8 P.M. (USA)

POSTSEASON
Saturday, May 30
Playoff Game #1, 8 P.M. (USA)
(site to be announced)
Sunday, May 31
Playoff Game #2, 1 P.M. (ABC)
(site to be announced)
Saturday, June 6
World Bowl, 8 P.M. (USA)

* Date subject to change
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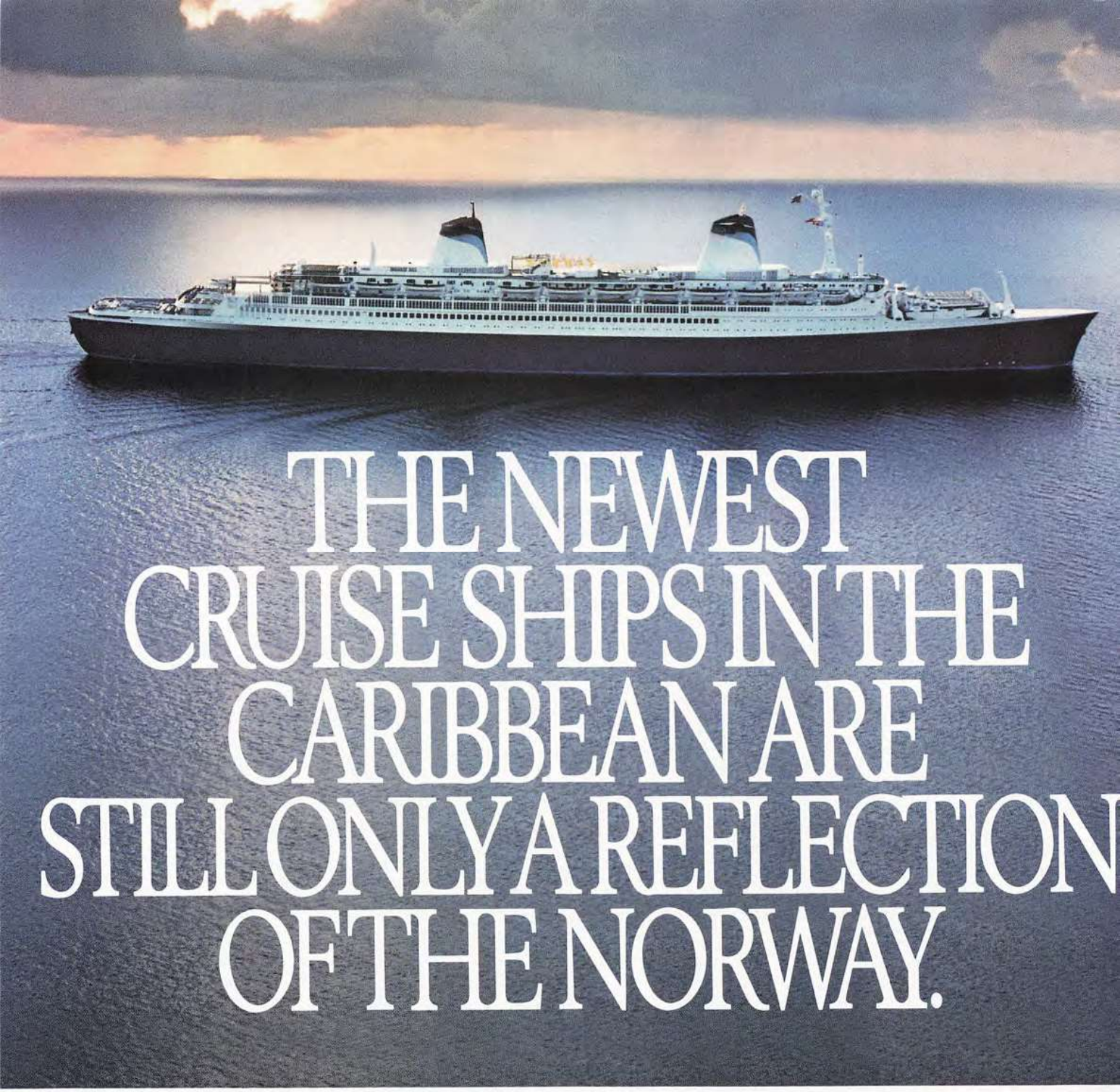

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INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

SCORING

Most Points, Career

24 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games (4-td)
Roger Craig, San Francisco, 3 games (4-td)
Jerry Rice, San Francisco, 2 games (4-td)
22 Ray Wersching, San Francisco, 2 games (7-pat, 5-fg)

Most Points, Game

18 Roger Craig, San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX (3-td)
Jerry Rice, San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV (3-td)
15 Don Chandler, Green Bay vs. Oakland, II (3-pat 4-fg)

Most Touchdowns, Career

4 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games (4-r)
Roger Craig, San Francisco, 3 games (2-r, 2-p)
Jerry Rice, San Francisco, 2 games (4-p)
3 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games (3-p)
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games (3-p)
Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games (3-p)

Most Touchdowns, Game

3 Roger Craig, San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX (1-r, 2-p)
Jerry Rice, San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV (3-p)
2 By many players

FIELD GOALS

Most Field Goals, Career

5 Ray Wersching, San Francisco, 2 games (5 att)
4 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games (4 att)
Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets-Denver, 2 games (6 att)
Uwe von Schamann, Miami, 2 games (4 att)

Most Field Goals, Game

4 Don Chandler, Green Bay vs. Oakland, II
Ray Wersching, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XVI
3 By five players

Longest Field Goal

48 Jan Stenerud, Kansas City vs. Minnesota, IV
Rich Karlis, Denver vs. N.Y. Giants, XXI
47 Jim Turner, Denver vs. Dallas, XII

RUSHING

Most Attempts, Career

101 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
64 John Riggins, Washington, 2 games

Most Attempts, Game

38 John Riggins, Washington vs. Miami, XVII
34 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, VIII

Most Yards Gained, Career

354 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
297 Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games

Most Yards Gained, Game

204 Timmy Smith, Washington vs. Denver, XXII
191 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, XVIII

Longest Run From Scrimmage

74 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, XVIII (TD)
58 Tom Matte, Baltimore vs. N.Y. Jets, III
Timmy Smith, Washington vs. Denver, XXII (TD)

Most Touchdowns, Career

4 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
2 By eight players.

Most Touchdowns, Game

2 By eight players

PASSING

Most Passes Attempted, Career

122 Joe Montana, San Francisco, 4 games
101 John Elway, Denver, 3 games

Most Passes Attempted, Game

50 Dan Marino, Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX
38 Ron Jaworski, Philadelphia vs. Oakland, XV
John Elway, Denver vs. Washington, XXII

Most Passes Completed, Career

83 Joe Montana, San Francisco, 4 games
61 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games

Most Passes Completed, Game

29 Dan Marino, Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX
25 Ken Anderson, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, XVI

Most Yards Gained, Career

1,142 Joe Montana, San Francisco, 4 games
932 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Yards Gained, Game

357 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
340 Doug Williams, Washington vs. Denver, XXII

Longest Pass Completion

80 Jim Plunkett (to King), Oakland vs. Philadelphia, XV (TD)
Doug Williams (to Sanders), Washington vs. Denver, XXII (TD)
76 David Woodley (to Cefalo), Miami vs. Washington, XVII (TD)

Most Touchdown Passes, Career

11 Joe Montana, San Francisco, 4 games
9 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Touchdown Passes, Game

5 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV
4 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, XIII
Doug Williams, Washington vs. Denver, XXII

Most Attempts, Without Interception, Game

36 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
35 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX

Most Passes Had Intercepted, Career

7 Craig Morton, Dallas-Denver, 2 games
6 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games
John Elway, Denver, 3 games

Most Passes Had Intercepted, Game

4 Craig Morton, Denver vs. Dallas, XII
3 By eight players

RECEPTIONS

Most Receptions, Career

20 Roger Craig, San Francisco, 3 games
18 Jerry Rice, San Francisco, 2 games

Most Receptions, Game

11 Dan Ross, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, XVI
Jerry Rice, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
10 Tony Nathan, Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX

Most Yards Gained, Career

364 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games
363 Jerry Rice, San Francisco, 2 games

Most Yards Gained, Game

215 Jerry Rice, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
193 Ricky Sanders, Washington vs. Denver, XXII

Longest Reception

80 Kenny King (from Plunkett), Oakland vs. Philadelphia, XV (TD)
Ricky Sanders (from Williams), Washington vs. Denver, XXII (TD)
76 Jimmy Cefalo (from Woodley), Miami vs. Washington, XVII (TD)

Most Touchdowns, Career

4 Jerry Rice, San Francisco, 2 games
3 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games
Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games

Most Touchdowns, Game

3 Jerry Rice, San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV
2 By seven players

INTERCEPTIONS BY

Most Interceptions By, Career

3 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
Rod Martin, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 2 games

Most Interceptions By, Game

3 Rod Martin, Oakland vs. Philadelphia, XV

Most Yards Gained, Career

75 Willie Brown, Oakland, 2 games
63 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games

Most Yards Gained, Game

75 Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, XI
63 Jake Scott, Miami vs. Washington, VII

Longest Return

75 Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, XI (TD)
60 Herb Adderley, Green Bay vs. Oakland, II (TD)

Most Touchdowns, Game

1 Herb Adderley, Green Bay vs. Oakland, II
Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, XI
Jack Squirek, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, XVIII
Reggie Phillips, Chicago vs. New England, XX

PUNTING

Most Punts, Career

17 Mike Eischeid, Oakland-Minnesota, 3 games
15 Larry Seiple, Miami, 3 games
Mike Horan, Denver, 3 games

Most Punts, Game

9 Ron Widby, Dallas vs. Baltimore, V

Longest Punt

63 Lee Johnson, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, XXIII
62 Rich Camarillo, New England vs Chicago, XX
61 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City vs. Green Bay, I

Highest Average, Punting, Career (10 punts)

46.5 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City, 2 games (11-511)
41.9 Ray Guy, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games (14-587)

Highest Average, Punting, Game (4 punts)

48.5 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City vs. Minnesota, IV (4-194)
46.3 Jim Miller, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XVI (4-185)

PUNT RETURNS

Most Punt Returns, Career

6 Willie Wood, Green Bay, 2 games
Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
Theo Bell, Pittsburgh, 2 games
Mike Nelms, Washington, 1 game
John Taylor, San Francisco, 2 games
5 Dana McLemore, San Francisco, 1 game

Most Punt Returns, Game

6 Mike Nelms, Washington vs. Miami, XVII
5 Willie Wood, Green Bay vs. Oakland, II
Dana McLemore, San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX

Most Fair Catches, Game

3 Ron Gardin, Baltimore vs. Dallas, V
Golden Richards, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, X
Greg Pruitt, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, XVIII
Al Edwards, Buffalo vs. N.Y. Giants, XXV
David Meggett, N.Y. Giants vs. Buffalo, XXV

Most Yards Gained, Career

94 John Taylor, San Francisco, 2 games
52 Mike Nelms, Washington, 1 game

Most Yards Gained, Game

56 John Taylor, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
52 Mike Nelms, Washington vs. Miami, XVII

Longest Return

45 John Taylor, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
34 Darrell Green, Washington vs. L.A. Raiders, XVIII

Highest Average, Career (4 returns)

15.7 John Taylor, San Francisco, 2 games (6-94)
10.8 Neal Colzie, Oakland, 1 game (4-43)

Highest Average, Game (3 returns)

18.7 John Taylor, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII (3-56)
12.7 John Taylor, San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV (3-38)

KICKOFF RETURNS

Most Kickoff Returns, Career

10 Ken Bell, Denver, 3 games
8 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh, 2 games
Fulton Walker, Miami, 2 games

Most Kickoff Returns, Game

7 Stephen Starring, New England vs. Chicago, XX
6 Darren Carrington, Denver vs. San Francisco, XXIV

Most Yards Gained, Career

283 Fulton Walker, Miami, 2 games
207 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most Yards Gained, Game

190 Fulton Walker, Miami vs. Washington, XVII
162 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, XIV

Longest Run

98 Fulton Walker, Miami vs. Washington, XVII (TD)
93 Stanford Jennings, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, XXIII (TD)

Highest Average, Career (4 returns)

35.4 Fulton Walker, Miami, 2 games (8-283)
25.9 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh, 2 games (8-207)

Highest Average, Game (3 returns)

47.5 Fulton Walker, Miami vs. Washington, XVII (4-190)
32.4 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, XIV (5-162)

TEAM RECORDS

SCORING

Most Points, Game

55 San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV
46 Chicago vs. New England, XX

Fewest Points, Game

3 Miami vs. Dallas, VI
6 Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, IX

Most Points, Both Teams, Game

66 Pittsburgh (35) vs. Dallas (31), XIII
65 San Francisco (55) vs. Denver (10), XXIV

Fewest Points, Both Teams, Game

21 Washington (7) vs. Miami (14), VII
22 Minnesota (6) vs. Pittsburgh (16), IX

Largest Margin of Victory, Game

45 San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV (55-10)
36 Chicago vs. New England, XX (46-10)

Most Points, Each Half

1st: 35 Washington vs. Denver, XXII
2nd: 30 New York Giants vs. Denver, XXI

Fewest Points, Both Teams, Each Half

1st: 2 Minnesota (0) vs. Pittsburgh (2), IX
2nd: 7 Miami (0) vs. Washington (7), VII
Denver (0) vs. Washington (7), XXII

FIRST DOWNS

Most First Downs, Game

31 San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX
28 San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV
25 Washington vs. Denver, XXII

Fewest First Downs, Game

9 Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, IX
Miami vs. Washington, XVII

Most First Downs, Both Teams, Game

50 San Francisco (31) vs. Miami (19), XIX
47 New York Giants (24) vs. Denver (23), XXI

Fewest First Downs, Both Teams, Game

24 Dallas (10) vs. Baltimore (14), V
26 Minnesota (9) vs. Pittsburgh (17), IX

TOTAL YARDS

Most Yards Gained, Game

602 Washington vs. Denver, XXII
537 San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX
461 San Francisco vs. Denver, XXIV

Fewest Yards Gained, Game

119 Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, IX
123 New England vs. Chicago, XX

Most Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

929 Washington (602) vs. Denver (327), XXII
851 San Francisco (537) vs. Miami (314), XIX

Fewest Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

452 Minnesota (119) vs. Pittsburgh (333), IX
481 Washington (228) vs. Miami (253), VII
Denver (156) vs. Dallas (325), XII

RUSHING

Most Attempts, Game

57 Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, IX
53 Miami vs. Minnesota, VIII

Fewest Attempts, Game

9 Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX
11 New England vs. Chicago, XX

Most Attempts, Both Teams, Game

81 Washington (52) vs. Miami (29), XVII
78 Pittsburgh (57) vs. Minnesota (21), IX
Oakland (52) vs. Minnesota (26), XI

Fewest Attempts, Both Teams, Game

49 Miami (9) vs. San Francisco (40), XIX
53 Kansas City (19) vs. Green Bay (34), I

Most Yards Gained, Game

280 Washington vs. Denver, XXII
276 Washington vs. Miami, XVII

Fewest Yards Gained, Game

7 New England vs. Chicago, XX
17 Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, IX

Most Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

377 Washington (280) vs. Denver (97), XXII
372 Washington (276) vs. Miami (96), XVII

Fewest Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

171 Baltimore (69) vs. Dallas (102), V
174 New England (7) vs. Chicago (167), XX

PASSING

Most Passes Attempted, Game

50 Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX
44 Minnesota vs. Oakland, XI

Fewest Passes Attempted, Game

7 Miami vs. Minnesota, VIII
11 Miami vs. Washington, VII

Most Passes Attempted, Both Teams, Game

85 Miami (50) vs. San Francisco (35), XIX
70 Baltimore (41) vs. New York Jets (29), III

Fewest Passes Attempted, Both Teams, Game

35 Miami (7) vs. Minnesota (28), VIII
39 Miami (11) vs. Washington (28), VII

Most Passes Completed, Game

29 Miami vs. San Francisco, XIX
26 Denver vs. New York Giants, XXI

Fewest Passes Completed, Game

4 Miami vs. Washington, XVII
6 Miami vs. Minnesota, VIII

Most Passes Completed, Both Teams, Game

53 Miami (29) vs. San Francisco (24), XIX
48 Denver (26) vs. New York Giants (22), XXI

Fewest Passes Completed, Both Teams, Game

19 Miami (4) vs. Washington (15), XVII
20 Pittsburgh (9) vs. Minnesota (11), IX

Most Yards Gained, Game

341 San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, XXIII
326 San Francisco vs. Miami, XIX

Fewest Yards Gained, Game

35 Denver vs. Dallas, XII
63 Miami vs. Minnesota, VIII

Most Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

615 San Francisco (326) vs. Miami (289), XIX
583 Denver (320) vs. New York Giants (263), XXI

Fewest Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game

156 Miami (69) vs. Washington (87), VII
186 Pittsburgh (84) vs. Minnesota (102), IX

Most Times Sacked, Game

7 Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, X
New England vs. Chicago, XX
6 Kansas City vs. Green Bay, I
Washington vs. Los Angeles Raiders, XVIII
Denver vs. San Francisco, XXIV

CAREER PASSING LEADERS
(minimum 40 attempts)

Player, Team	Games	Att.	Comp.	Pct. Comp.	Yds.	Avg. Gain	TD	Pct. TD	Long	Int.	Pct. Int.	Rating Points
Joe Montana, San Francisco	4	122	83	68.0	1142	9.36	11	9.0	44	0	0.0	127.8
Jim Plunkett, Oakland-L.A.Raiders	2	46	29	63.0	433	9.41	4	8.7	80t	0	0.0	122.8
Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh	4	84	49	58.3	932	11.10	9	10.7	75t	4	4.8	112.8
Bart Starr, Green Bay	2	47	29	61.7	452	9.62	3	6.4	62t	1	2.1	106.0
Roger Staubach, Dallas	4	98	61	62.2	734	7.49	8	8.2	45t	4	4.1	95.4
Len Dawson, Kansas City	2	44	28	63.6	353	8.02	2	4.5	46t	2	4.5	84.8
Bob Griese, Miami	3	41	26	63.4	295	7.20	1	2.4	28t	2	4.9	72.7
Dan Marino, Miami	1	50	29	58.0	318	6.36	1	2.0	30	2	4.0	66.9
Joe Theismann, Washington	2	58	31	53.4	386	6.66	2	3.4	60	4	6.9	57.1
John Elway, Denver	3	101	46	45.5	669	6.62	2	1.9	56t	6	5.9	49.5
Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota	3	89	46	51.7	489	5.49	1	1.1	30	6	6.7	43.7

Joe Montana

Al Messerschmidt

Miami Dolphins running back Larry Csonka

Rod Hanna

CAREER RUSHING LEADERS

Player, Team	Games	Yards	Attempts	Avg.	Long	TD
Franco Harris, Pittsburgh	4	354	101	3.5	25	4
Larry Csonka, Miami	3	297	57	5.2	49	2
John Riggins, Washington	2	230	64	3.6	43t	2
Timmy Smith, Washington	1	204	22	9.3	58t	2
Roger Craig, San Francisco	3	198	52	3.8	18	2
Marcus Allen, L.A.Raiders	1	191	20	9.6	74t	2
Tony Dorsett, Dallas	2	162	31	5.2	29	1
Mark van Eeghen, Oakland	2	148	36	4.1	11	0
Rocky Bleier, Pittsburgh	4	144	44	3.3	18	0
Walt Garrison, Dallas	2	139	26	5.3	19	0

CAREER RECEIVING LEADERS

Player, Team	Games	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TD
Roger Craig, San Francisco	3	20	212	10.6	40	2
Jerry Rice, San Francisco	2	18	363	20.2	44	4
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh	4	16	364	22.8	64t	3
Chuck Foreman, Minnesota	3	15	139	9.3	26	0
Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders	3	14	181	12.9	50	3
Preston Pearson, Balt.-Pitt.-Dall.	5	12	105	8.8	14	0
John Stallworth, Pittsburgh	4	11	268	24.4	75t	3
Dan Ross, Cincinnati	1	11	104	9.5	16	2
Otis Taylor, Kansas City	2	10	138	13.8	46t	1
Dwight Clark, San Francisco	2	10	122	12.2	33	0
Tony Nathan, Miami	1	10	83	8.3	25	0

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Time Out

Dead Ball or Neutral Zone Established, Crowd Noise

First Down

Personal Foul

Ball Illegally Touched, Kicked, or Batted

Delay of Game

No Time Out or Time in With Whistle

Offside or Encroaching

Holding

Penalty Refused, Incomplete Pass, Play Over, or Missed Field Goal

Ineligible Receiver or Ineligible Member of Kicking Team Downfield

Illegal Motion at Snap

Crawling, Interlocking Interference, Pushing, or Helping Runner

Unsportsmanlike Conduct Chop Blocks

Tripping

Illegal Crackback

Illegal Cut or Blocking Below the Waist

Intentional Grounding of Pass

Touching a Forward Pass or Scrimmage Kick

Player Disqualified

Illegal Contact

False Start, Illegal Shift, Illegal Formation, or Kickoff or Safety Kick Out of Bounds

Illegal Use of Hands, Arms, or Body

Pass Juggled Inbounds, and Caught Out of Bounds

Illegal Forward Pass

Loss of Down

Invalid Fair Catch Signal

Uncatchable Forward Pass

Interference With Forward Pass or Fair Catch

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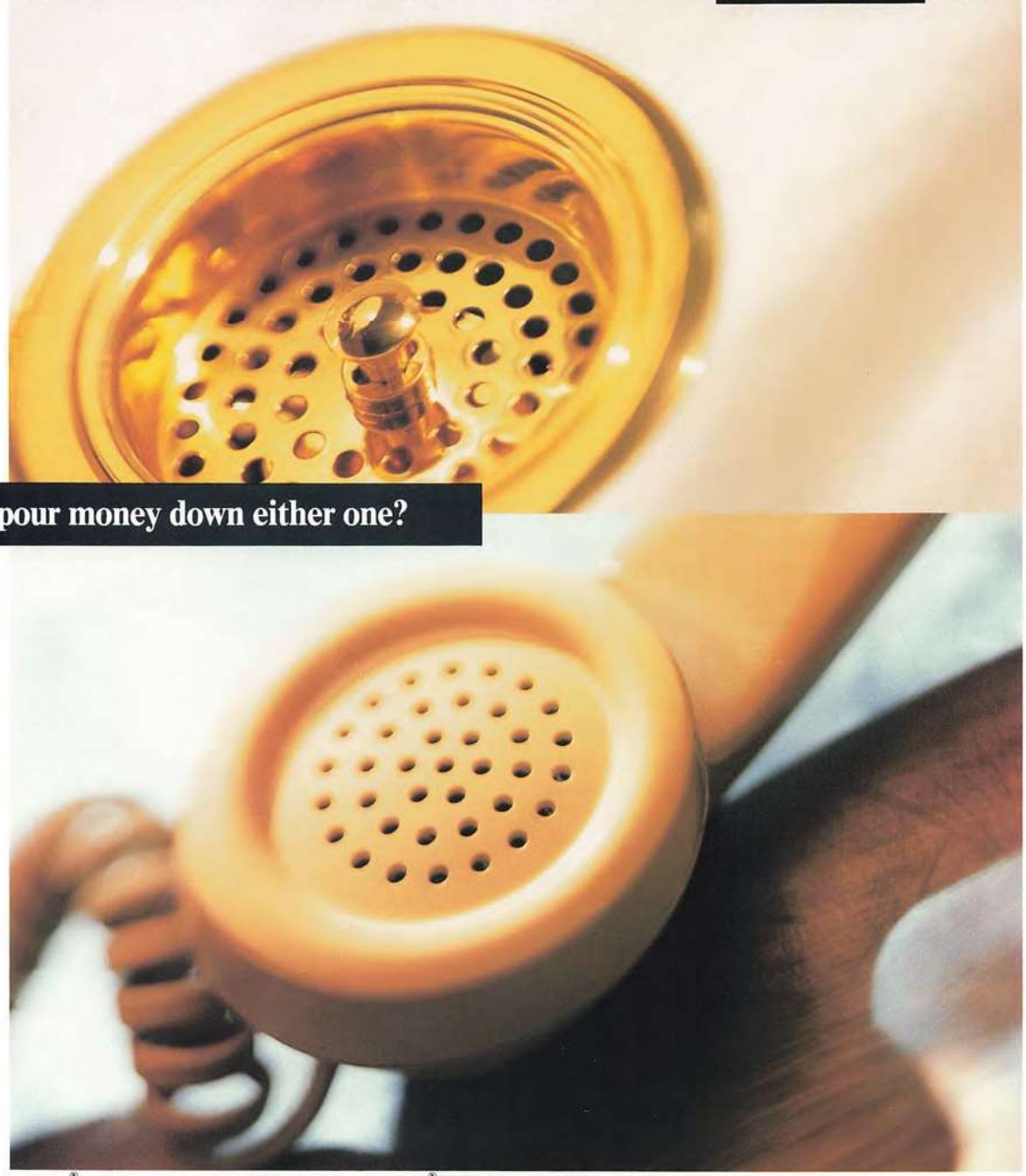

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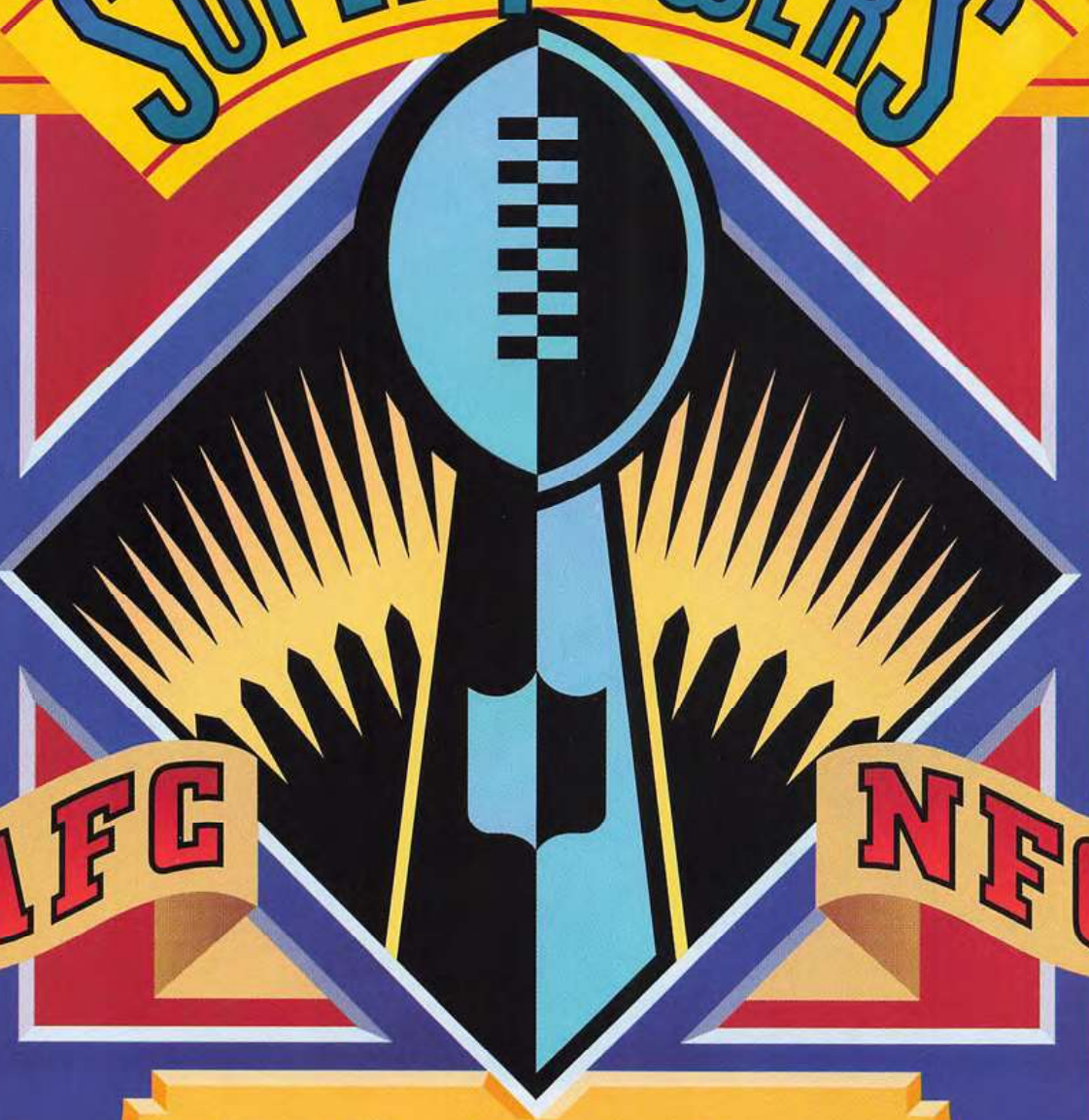

THE TOP TEAMS FROM
THE SUPER BOWL'S FIRST
QUARTER CENTURY

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NFL

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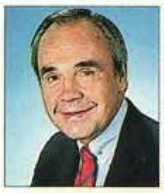

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SUPER TEAMS

by Dick Enberg

Which is the best Super Bowl team of all time? If you asked 10 fans that question, you probably would get 10 different answers. Some would pick the dynasty teams—the Steelers, Packers, and 49ers. Others would say the overpowering Redskins of Super Bowl XXII or the perfect Dolphins of Super Bowl VII.

As a broadcaster, I would pick the Bears of Super Bowl XX as the most omnipotent team in Super Bowl history. As the 46-10 final score of that game reflects, Chicago was the best, by far, of the NFL that 1985 season. Merlin Olsen and I used more ad lib material (player personalities, coaching backgrounds, history, reflections, not to mention the "Super Bowl Shuffle") during that Super Bowl game than any other telecast of our 12 years together in the NBC television booth. The Bears' superior ability not only made their opponents work, they had broadcasters preparing overtime for their lopsided victories.

But which team actually is the best? Well, that's what this Super Powers insert is all about. With the help of master sports statistician Steve Hirdt and his computer, we have taken each of the 50 teams that have played in the Super Bowl and rated them in 10 key categories. Then, the scores from each category were combined to determine an overall winner.

Whether or not you agree with the ultimate outcome, there is one thing on which all football fans can agree: No matter who wins a Super Bowl game, we get to watch the best in the sport compete. And that's what makes the National Football League finale each season such a delicious celebration.

HOW THE TEAMS WERE RANKED

Each team in each Super Bowl was treated as an individual entity. Thus, the 49ers of Super Bowl XVI, for example, were rated independently of the 49ers of Super Bowl XIX. Number of Super Bowl appearances by any one franchise had no bearing on the final rankings. Statistics used to determine the rankings include points, yards, turnovers, first downs, and average-per-play. Within each category, each team's Super Bowl statistics were compared to a predetermined standard for that category, based on the average performance by an NFL team during the season preceding each Super Bowl. Then, each Super Bowl team's adjusted statistics were ranked in each category from 1-50. The category scores are on a scale of 100, with 100 being a perfect score and zero the lowest. The top five teams in each category are shown on the following pages. Each team's scores in the 10 categories were combined to produce the final ratings.

—Steve Hirdt

RUSHING OFFENSE

	ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD	SCORE
XXII (vs. Denver) 1987 SEASON	40	280	7.0	13	97.14
XVII (vs. Miami) 1982 SEASON	52	276	5.3	14	94.69
VI (vs. Miami) 1971 SEASON	48	252	5.3	15	89.80
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON	40	211	5.3	16	89.39
XVIII (vs. Washington) 1983 SEASON	33	231	7.0	8	87.76

Two Washington Redskins teams of the 1980s earned the top two spots in Super Bowl rushing dominance. The 1987 Redskins, who defeated Denver 42-10 in Super Bowl XXII, set a Super Bowl record with 280 rushing yards and tied a record with a 7-yard-per-carry average. Most of Washington's yards on the ground were gained by rookie running back Timmy Smith (*right, taking the handoff from quarterback and game MVP Doug Williams*), who became the only player in Super Bowl history to gain more than 200 yards rushing (204) in one game. The 1982 Redskins' rushing game in Super Bowl XVII was powered by John Riggins, who set a then-Super Bowl record with 166 yards on 38 carries.

PASSING OFFENSE

	ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD	SCORE
XIV (vs. Los Angeles Rams) 1979 SEASON	21	309	14.7	10	91.84
XIII (vs. Dallas) 1978 SEASON	34	291	8.6	15	88.16
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON	36	326	9.1	15	87.35
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON	33	317	9.6	14	86.53
XXI (vs. Denver) 1986 SEASON	26	263	10.1	13	86.12

Quarterbacks Terry Bradshaw of the Pittsburgh Steelers and Joe Montana of the San Francisco 49ers, helped their teams earn two places each in the top five in passing offense. In Super Bowl XIV, Bradshaw averaged a record 14.7 yards per pass play, throwing for 309 yards and 2 touchdowns (*including a 73-yard bomb to wide receiver John Stallworth, left*). He also became the second player to win consecutive MVP awards after leading the Steelers to a 31-19 victory over the Rams. In the previous Super Bowl, Bradshaw passed for 318 yards and became the first quarterback to throw 4 touchdown passes in a game. Montana, in Super Bowl XXIV, broke that record with 5 scoring passes against Denver.

RUSHING DEFENSE

The 1985 Chicago Bears put on one of the greatest displays ever of rushing defense in Super Bowl XX. The Bears' league-leading defense (*below*) held the New England Patriots to 7 rushing yards and 0.6 yards per rush, both Super Bowl records. In fact, the 7 rushing yards tied the lowest total ever allowed by one team in a postseason game; Boston had held Buffalo to the same total in a 1963 AFL playoff game. Chicago set another Super Bowl record in its 46-10 victory by allowing New England just 1 rushing first down. In fact, the longest run by any Patriots player during the game was for 3 yards.

	ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD	SCORE
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON	11	7	0.6	1	99.59
IX (vs. Minnesota) 1974 SEASON	21	17	0.8	2	97.14
XI (vs. Minnesota) 1976 SEASON	26	71	2.7	2	93.47
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON	9	25	2.8	2	91.02
XIII (vs. Pittsburgh) 1978 SEASON	24	66	2.8	2	88.16

PASSING DEFENSE

	ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD	SCORE
XII (vs. Denver) 1977 SEASON	29	35	1.2	1	98.78
XVII (vs. Miami) 1982 SEASON	18	80	4.4	2	91.43
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON	35	103	2.9	6	90.61
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON	43	116	2.7	10	88.16
V (vs. Dallas) 1970 SEASON	28	113	4.0	5	86.12

In a much-anticipated matchup of Denver's "Orange Crush" defense and Dallas's "Doomsday II," the Cowboys proved superior. Dallas's defense, led by co-MVPs defensive end Harvey Martin and defensive tackle Randy White, limited Denver to a Super Bowl-record-low 35 passing yards. Denver quarterbacks Craig Morton and Norris Weese were held to a total of only 8 completions in 25 attempts. In a 27-10 victory, the Cowboys intercepted the Broncos 4 times, tying a Super Bowl record. Dallas's offense converted 2 of those interceptions into 10 points. Dallas also had 5 sacks (*above*), 1½ by Martin. The Broncos' average of 1.4 yards per pass play is the lowest total in Super Bowl history.

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THE NFL TEAM WITH THE MOST SUPER BOWL APPEARANCES MAY SURPRISE YOU.

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SCORING OFFENSE

The San Francisco 49ers' 55-10 victory over the Denver Broncos set Super Bowl scoring records for points and margin of victory. The 49ers also set a record with 8 touchdowns, scoring 2 in each quarter and on 4 of their 6 first-half possessions. Quarterback Joe Montana (*below*) set another record by throwing 5 touchdown passes, a record 3 caught by wide receiver Jerry Rice. Rice's 3 touchdowns in a game tied the individual scoring record set by teammate Roger Craig in Super Bowl XIX.

PTS.		SCORE
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON	55	100.00
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON	46	97.96
XXII (vs. Denver) 1987 SEASON	42	95.92
XXI (vs. Denver) 1986 SEASON	39	93.88
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON	38	91.84

FUM.	INT.	TOT.		SCORE
II (vs. Oakland) 1967 SEASON	0	0	0	100.00
X (vs. Dallas) 1975 SEASON	0	0	0	97.96
XI (vs. Minnesota) 1976 SEASON	0	0	0	95.92
VIII (vs. Minnesota) 1973 SEASON	0	0	0	93.88
XV (vs. Philadelphia) 1980 SEASON	0	0	0	91.84

GIVEAWAYS

Nine teams have played a Super Bowl without losing a fumble or an interception. All of those teams were Super Bowl winners except Buffalo in Super Bowl XXV; neither the Bills nor the Giants had a turnover, the only postseason game in NFL history in which that has happened. The 1967 Packers, led to a second consecutive Super Bowl victory 33-14 over Oakland by quarterback Bart Starr (*right*), rated best in this category on the basis of Super Bowl performance vs. NFL average performance that season.

TOTAL OFFENSE

There was a tie for best offensive performance in Super Bowl history. The 1987 Redskins set Super Bowl records with 602 total yards and an 8.4-yard-per-attempt average in their 42-10 Super Bowl XXII victory over Denver. Redskins quarterback Doug Williams tied a record with 4 touchdown passes (since broken), including 1 to wide receiver Gary Clark (*right*). The 1984 49ers gained a Super Bowl-record 31 first downs and a then-record 537 yards in defeating Miami 38-16 in Super Bowl XIX.

ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD		SCORE
XXII (vs. Denver) 1987 SEASON	72	602	8.4	25	98.37
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON	76	537	7.1	31	98.37
XXIII (vs. Cincinnati) 1988 SEASON	67	453	6.8	23	89.80
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON	77	461	6.0	28	88.16
XI (vs. Minnesota) 1976 SEASON	73	429	5.9	21	84.49

PTS.		SCORE
VI (vs. Miami) 1971 SEASON	3	100.00
III (vs. Baltimore) 1968 SEASON	7	97.96
IV (vs. Minnesota) 1969 SEASON	7	95.92
VII (vs. Washington) 1972 SEASON	7	93.88
XVIII (vs. Washington) 1983 SEASON	9	91.84

SCORING DEFENSE

The Dallas Cowboys held the Miami Dolphins to just a field goal in Super Bowl VI, winning 24-3. The Cowboys remain the only team in the history of the Super Bowl to deny its opponent a touchdown. The Dolphins had averaged 22.5 points per game during the 1971 regular season, and had scored a total of 48 points in playoff victories over Kansas City and Baltimore. But Dallas held Miami to a total of 185 yards, relentlessly pressuring Dolphins' quarterback Bob Griese (*left*) all day.

TAKEAWAYS

The 1977 Cowboys set a Super Bowl record with 8 takeaways in a 27-10 victory over the Broncos in Super Bowl XII. Dallas's Doomsday II defense intercepted 4 passes and recovered 4 fumbles (*below*), tying Super Bowl records in each category. The Cowboys' defense forced all of Denver quarterback Craig Morton's Super Bowl-record 4 interceptions and 3 of the Broncos' fumbles in the first half. (Morton had thrown just 8 interceptions all season.) In all, 17 of Dallas's 27 points were a direct result of turnovers.

FUM.	INT.	TOT.	SCORE
XII (vs. Denver) 1977 SEASON	4	4	8	100.00
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON	4	2	6	97.96
V (vs. Baltimore) 1970 SEASON	3	3	6	95.92
IX (vs. Minnesota) 1974 SEASON	2	3	5	93.88
IV (vs. Minnesota) 1969 SEASON	2	3	5	91.84

ATT.	YDS.	AVG.	FD	SCORE
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON	54	123	2.3	12	99.18
IX (vs. Minnesota) 1974 SEASON	47	119	2.5	9	97.96
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON	52	167	3.2	12	95.51
XVII (vs. Miami) 1982 SEASON	47	176	3.7	9	92.65
XII (vs. Denver) 1977 SEASON	58	156	2.7	11	91.84

TOTAL DEFENSE

The 1985 Bears held the Patriots to only 123 total yards and a Super Bowl-record-low 2.3 yards per offensive attempt in a 46-10 victory. The Bears tied the Super Bowl record with 7 sacks (*below*), their intense pass rush led by defensive end Richard Dent, the game's MVP. The Patriots kicked a field goal after recovering a Bears' fumble on the fourth play from scrimmage at the Chicago 19. The only other New England score was a fourth-quarter touchdown after the Bears had surged to a 44-3 lead.

1989 SEASON • SUPER BOWL XXIV

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

FINAL RANKINGS

SCORE
XXIV (vs. Denver) 1989 SEASON 84.53
XX (vs. New England) 1985 SEASON 81.76
XXII (vs. Denver) 1987 SEASON 75.59
XIX (vs. Miami) 1984 SEASON 73.18
VI (vs. Miami) 1971 SEASON 73.02
XVIII (vs. Washington) 1983 SEASON 72.29
IX (vs. Minnesota) 1974 SEASON 72.10
XII (vs. Denver) 1977 SEASON 70.88
XI (vs. Minnesota) 1976 SEASON 70.24
I (vs. Kansas City) 1966 SEASON 69.37

The 1989 San Francisco 49ers' overwhelming 55-10 triumph in Super Bowl XXIV set them apart from the other Super Powers. In decisively winning their fourth Super Bowl, tying the record established by the Pittsburgh Steelers a decade earlier, the 49ers set Super Bowl records for most points, most touchdowns, and largest margin of victory. Other areas of 49ers' dominance included first downs (28 to 12), net yards (461 to 167), and time of possession (39:31 to 20:29). Led on offense by quarterback Joe Montana, who was named the Super Bowl most valuable player for an unprecedented third time, running back Roger Craig, and wide receiver Jerry Rice, and on defense by nose tackle Michael Carter, defensive end Charles Haley, and safety Ronnie Lott, the 1989 49ers fielded one of the most talented, balanced, and powerful teams in NFL history. ■

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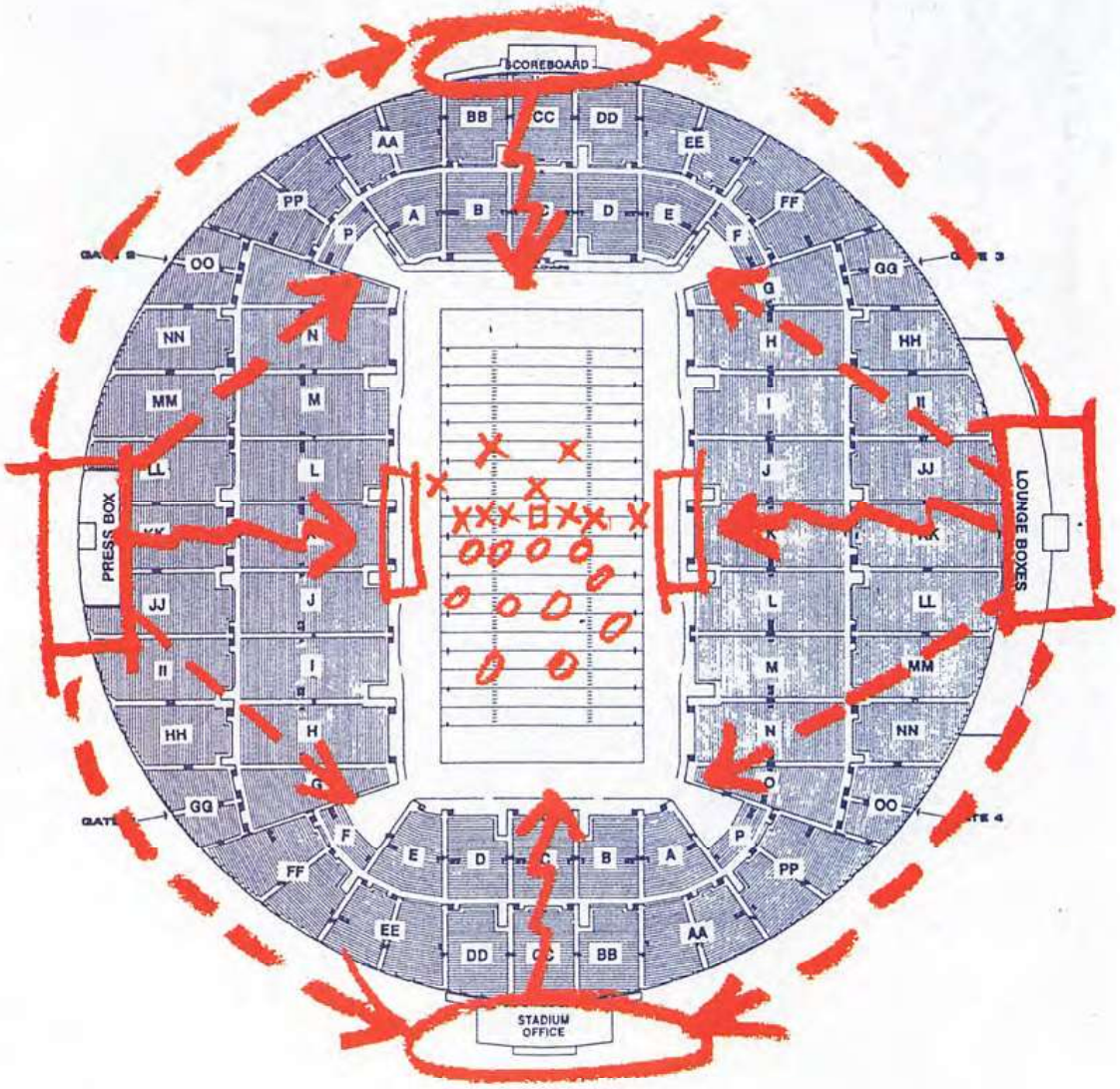

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THE POWER IS ON

THE SCOUTING REPORT

The Matchups
Starting Lineups
Player Photos
How the Teams Were Built
Numerical Rosters

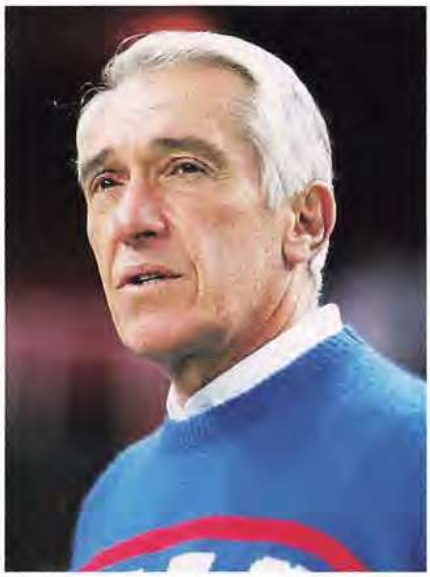
BUFFALO BILLS

Another section of this program discusses the turning points certain teams have reached en route to Super Bowl championships (see page 29). Most of these turning points came during the regular season, some during the playoffs, but if the Buffalo Bills should triumph over the Washington Redskins in Minneapolis, you can mark this turning point: the closing seconds of Super Bowl XXV.

Almost immediately after Scott Norwood's 47-yard field-goal attempt sailed wide-right against the Giants, most members of the Bills, from star players to trainers, focused on Super Bowl XXVI.

Of course, there were 27 other NFL teams with similar mindsets; the difference was Buffalo's wealth of talent. The starting lineup today is remarkably similar to that of a year ago: the only new starters are guard Glenn Parker, fullback Carwell Gardner, linebacker Carlton Bailey, and punter Chris Mohr, and three of those players (all but Mohr) saw substantial playing time in 1990.

The core of the team remains the same. The defense still features end Bruce Smith and linebackers Cornelius Bennett, Shane Conlan, and Darryl Talley, all of them prior or current Pro Bowl selections. And the offense still revolves around quarterback Jim Kelly (the highest-rated passer in the AFC), running back Thurman Thomas (the NFL leader in yards from scrimmage), and wide receivers Andre Reed and James Lofton.



Head coach Marv Levy's (above) primary goal for 1991 was to keep his talented team on an even emotional keel. He did just that, leaving the play selection to Pro Bowl quarterback Jim Kelly (opposite).

Perhaps most important, those latter four standouts still operate in a trendsetting no-huddle offense that very few NFL teams have been able to slow, let alone stop (Denver's brilliant defensive scheme in the 1991 AFC Championship Game was a notable exception). The Bills scored 458 points (second only to Washington's 485) and averaged a dizzying 390.8 yards per game in the regular season while eschewing the huddle.

The trigger man is Kelly, who continues to grow as a field leader. "If you look into my eyes on the sidelines," head coach Marv Levy recently told the *Buffalo News*, "you'd see that I'd rather be sending him out there to get it done than anybody else I know."

The statistical downside was a defense that ranked twenty-seventh in the NFL, despite the presence of the legitimate Pro Bowl players. Heading into the 1991 season, Levy said: "Our focus this year is on being a better team against the run."

Instead, Buffalo was even worse, though much of the explanation can be found in a medical report. Smith, the NFL defensive player of the year in 1990, missed most of the season while rehabilitating his knee; nose tackle Jeff Wright missed seven games with his own knee malady; and young Phil Hansen, Smith's replacement, sat out two games with a sprained ankle.

Considering those injuries and defensive shortcomings, it's amazing how easy it sometimes appeared for the Bills as they wrapped up their fourth consecutive AFC East title. It's safe to say they couldn't have done it without a rabid base of fans that established a single-season attendance record (635,889) in 1991. The question is: Are the Bills the best team on a neutral field?

OFFENSE

Al Messerschmidt

Al Messerschmidt

12
Wilson
NFL
69

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

The new Washington Monument is 51 years old, slightly paunchy, wears glasses, and looks like an advanced calculus professor at Cal Tech.

But it is time the new Washington Monument got recognized as a tourist attraction just like the other one. It is time that Joe Gibbs got his due.

He has won with running teams. He has won with passing teams. He has won with teams of thoroughbred talent. He has won with plow horses.

Mostly Joe Gibbs has won.

This will be his fourth Super Bowl and he has taken home two trophies. In Minneapolis, he will go for a third.

In 11 seasons as a head coach, he has won 129 of 186 games, a winning percentage of nearly 70 percent.

He is, arguably, the best coach in the game.

The team that has powered its way past 16 of 18 opponents this year, posting an *average* per game score of 30-14, before destroying Atlanta and Detroit in the playoffs by a combined 65-17, has five Plan B players on defense, a quarterback (Mark Rypien) who still has detractors in spite of his impressive season, two running backs who were deemed over the hill by their previous employers, and a dozen players over age 30.

Gibbs and his superb coaching staff (Richie Petitbon deserves special mention on defense) have taken these disparate parts and made them into a powerful force.

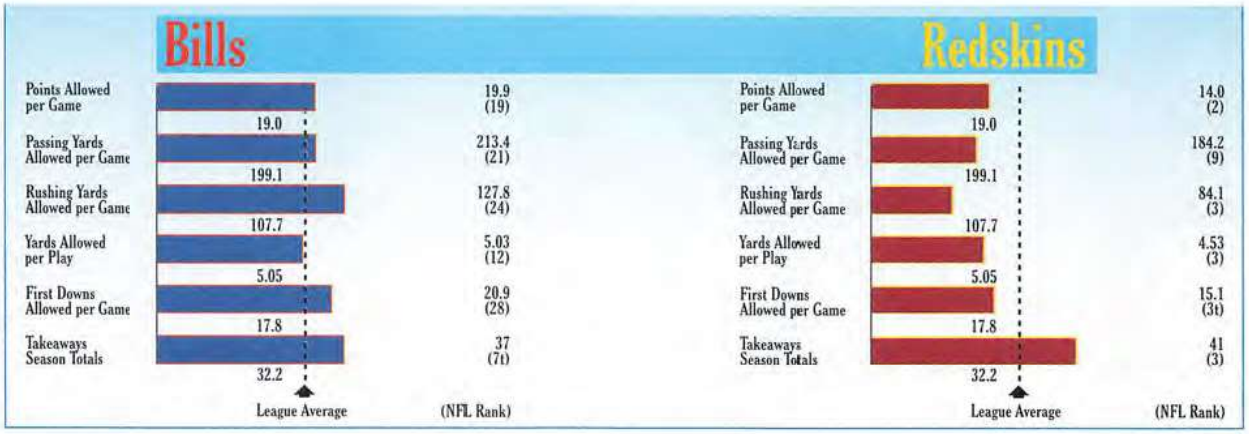
Two old but venerable pros: coach Joe Gibbs, in his eleventh season, and wide receiver Art Monk (opposite), in his twelfth. Gibbs had his eighth season of double-digit wins; Monk had his sixth 70-catch year.

This is a team that plays even better than the sum of its considerable parts because it plays together, because it always is well prepared, because it almost never makes costly errors. In 18 games this year, the Redskins have turned the ball over only 24 times (in contrast to their opponents' 50). Washington's quarterbacks have been sacked a total of only 9 times (the total sack production for the Redskins' defense is 59). Gibbs's team was one of the least-penalized in the NFL in the regular season and in two playoffs games had a total of just 8 infractions.

The Redskins lead the league in a lot of things, including nicknames. There are the irrepressible Hogs, who may be even better named (and talented) than they were when swine fever first hit Washington in the early '80s. There is The Posse, the phenomenal wide receiver threesome of Art Monk, Gary Clark, and Ricky Sanders. There are the Killer Plan Bs—the five defensive players who have joined with some quality holdovers to form the third-rated defense in the NFL. There are Heavy and Jumbo, the names that go with the Redskins' *five* tight ends who average 246 pounds (and that doesn't include 284-pound guard Russ Grimm, who threw a crucial touchdown block while lined up at a tight end position against the Lions!).

This is a team that can win many ways, a team that can finesse you or smash you in the mouth. This is a team that always is thinking of new ways to win...and then almost always doing just that. It is, after all, Joe Gibbs's team.

DEFENSE



Tom Miller

Bob Rosato

PASSING

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

BILLS

Wide receiver Andre Reed caught 81 passes as quarterback Jim Kelly's favorite target. His 1,113 yards and 10 touchdown catches ranked second in the AFC in both categories.

Quarterback Jim Kelly has to restart the Bills' offense if Buffalo is to win the Super Bowl trophy that has eluded AFC teams for seven years.

The Bills built an AFC-best 13-3 record during the regular season, easily handled the Kansas City Chiefs in the divisional playoffs, then sputtered badly against the aroused Denver Broncos in the AFC Championship Game.

Now it is up to Kelly, the top-rated passer in the AFC, to rally his team and get the Bills' hurry-up offense back in gear for Super Bowl XXVI.

Kelly brings impressive numbers into Buffalo's second consecutive try for the Vince Lombardi Trophy. He threw a club-record 33 touchdown passes in 1991, completing 304 of 474 passes for 3,844 yards. With just 17 interceptions, Kelly built the third-best passer rating in the NFL at 97.6.

He has a number of impressive receivers, but his number-one target is Andre Reed, a seven-year veteran who led all Bills receivers with 81 catches for 1,113 yards and 10 touchdowns during the regular season.

Kelly likes to find Reed on short crossing patterns over the middle, but if the defense is giving away coverage on long passes, Reed has enough speed to go deep, too.

Denver took away the short routes, mainly with a heavy pass rush and a variety of blitzes, which left Reed, tight end Keith McKeller, and running back Thurman Thomas with few opportunities in Buffalo's normally productive short-passing game.

Thomas made 62 catches for 631 yards and 5 touchdowns in the regular season, and McKeller 44 for 434 and 3 touchdowns.

The long threat is 14-year veteran James Lofton, who seems to have maintained his sprinter speed through the years. He averaged 18.8 yards on 57 catches, totaling 1,072 yards and scoring 8 touchdowns. Don Beebe is an acrobatic receiver who can go short or long. Al Edwards also is utilized in the long-passing game. Reserve running back Kenneth Davis caught 20 passes.

But for Buffalo to reverse the ending of its first Super Bowl appearance, last year's 20-19 loss to the New York Giants, Kelly must get the hurry-up clicking again with both the running and passing games in sync.

PASSING

	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	Pct.	Avg.	TD	Pct. TD	Long	Int.	Pct. Int.	Sacks/Yards	Rating
Kelly	474	304	3,844	64.1	8.11	33	7.0	t77	17	3.6	31/227	97.6
Reich	41	27	305	65.9	7.44	6	14.6	29	2	4.9	4/42	107.2
Mohr	1	1	-9	100.0	-9.00	0	0.0	-9	0	0.0	0/0	—

t—touchdown

RECEIVING

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Reed	81	1,113	13.7	55	10
Thomas	62	631	10.2	t50	5
Lofton	57	1,072	18.8	t77	8
McKeller	44	434	9.9	t29	3
Beebe	32	414	12.9	t34	6
Edwards	22	228	10.4	t33	1
K. Davis	20	118	5.9	t14	1
Metzelaars	5	54	10.8	t51	2
Gardner	3	20	6.7	11	0
Rolle	3	10	3.3	5	2
Tasker	2	39	19.5	t20	1
Alexander	1	7	7.0	7	0

t—touchdown

REDSKINS

The Redskins' passing philosophy resembles something out of George Orwell's *1984*. In a nutshell: Less is more. They pass less frequently than the typical NFL team (102 times fewer than their opponents in 1991), but for more yards. They ran 54 percent of the time, but averaged 8.44 yards per passing attempt—easily the best figure in the league.

In what is sometimes described as a vertical passing attack, the Redskins design game plans that include deep pass patterns, frequently on play-action, set up by a numbing, ball-control ground game.

The primary targets are veteran wide receivers Art Monk and Gary Clark, who combined for 141 catches and 18 touchdown receptions during the 1991 season. They can find holes in a defense, and they give cornerbacks nightmares with their speed.

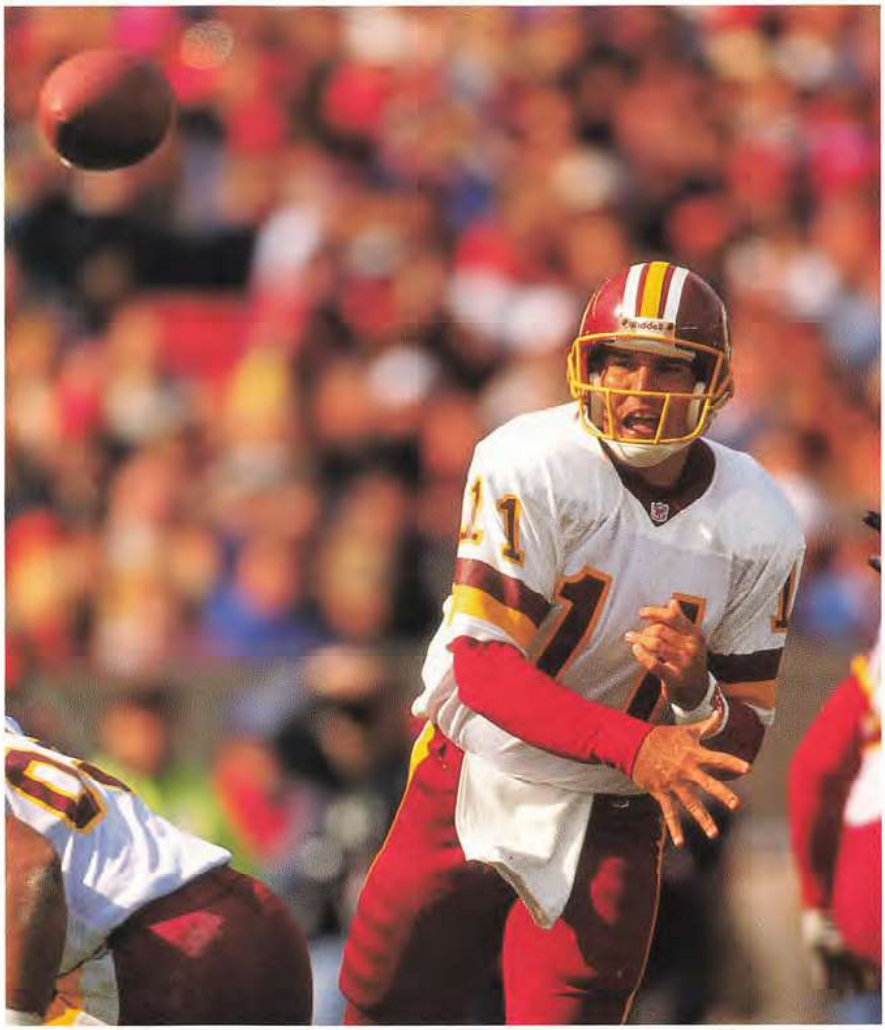
When Washington goes to a three-receiver set in a middle- or long-yardage situation, those two are joined by Ricky Sanders, another sure-handed veteran who contributed 45 receptions and 5 touchdowns during the regular season.

The trigger man who makes the system work—and the reason for the Redskins' passing rebirth—is quarterback Mark Rypien, whose forte is the long pass. He blossomed in 1991, his third full season as a starter, when he fully embraced the disciplined system of head coach Joe Gibbs. He quit forcing passes into double coverage and threw the ball away in the face of a heavy rush.

Rypien enjoys the best pass protection in the NFL. Behind the offensive line nicknamed the Hogs, he was sacked only 7 times all season. A key pass-rush matchup today will be on the left side of the line, where tackle Jim Lachey faces Bills standout defensive end Bruce Smith.

Rypien also uses running back Earnest Byner as a receiver—Byner had 34 catches for 308 yards—but usually only if he can't find Monk or Clark. Byner also is capable of throwing an option pass. He completed 1 against the Lions for an 18-yard touchdown during the regular season.

Three tight ends see frequent action, usually in blocking roles, but one to watch as a receiver is Terry Orr. Of his 10 receptions, 4 went for touchdowns That's the Redskins: They make those catches count.



Bill Mount

Quarterback Mark Rypien enjoyed his best season in 1991, passing for 28 touchdowns while throwing only 11 interceptions. Known for his ability to throw deep, he averaged 8.47 yards per attempt.

RECEIVING

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Monk	71	1,049	14.8	t64	8
Clark	70	1,340	19.1	t82	10
Sanders	45	580	12.9	45	5
Byner	34	308	9.1	31	0
Ervins	16	181	11.3	28	1
Orr	10	201	20.1	t47	4
Warren	5	51	10.2	17	0
Middleton	3	25	8.3	11	0
Hobbs	3	24	8.0	10	0
Ji. Johnson	3	7	2.3	t4	2
Riggs	1	5	5.0	5	0

t—touchdown

PASSING

PASSING	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	Pct.	Avg.	TD	Pct. TD	Long	Int.	Pct. Int.	Sacks/Yards	Rating
Rypien	421	249	3,564	59.1	8.47	28	6.7	t82	11	2.6	7/59	97.9
Rutledge	22	11	189	50.0	8.59	1	4.5	t40	0	0.0	2/20	94.7
Byner	4	1	18	25.0	4.50	1	25.0	t18	0	0.0	0/0	85.4

t—touchdown

SCOUTING REPORT

RUSHING

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

BILLS

Known more for their wide-open passing offense, the Bills are equally adept at running the ball. Buffalo led the NFL in rushing in 1991, largely because of Thurman Thomas, who gained a career-high 1,407 yards.

With quarterback Jim Kelly leading their no-huddle offense, the Buffalo Bills certainly do not look the part of a running team.

But Kelly and the Bills proved that they could hurry up and hand off as well as they could hurry up and pass, averaging an NFL-best 148.8 rushing yards per game in 1991.

Of course, any offense that features Thurman Thomas figures to excel at running the ball. Thomas found the Bills' new offense to his liking, posting career highs in rushing yards (1,407), yards per carry (4.9), and total yards from scrimmage (2,038).

It was Thomas's third consecutive 1,000-yard season, and the second consecutive year he has led the National Football League in total yards from scrimmage.

He was particularly devastating on artificial turf, the surface on which Super Bowl XXVI will be played. Thomas averaged 5.3 yards per carry in 11 regular-season games on artificial turf.

His backup is Kenneth Davis, who gained 624 yards and averaged 4.8 yards per carry in relief.

Thomas and Davis produced almost all of the Bills' rushing yards. The other starting back, Carwell Gardner, is used mostly for blocking, carrying just 42 times in 1991.

Although Gardner does not run much, he is an indicator of the Bills' intentions. When Buffalo utilizes a one-back set with three wide receivers, Kelly's play-calling is balanced between run and pass. When the Bills go to a two-back set, they run twice as often.

Thomas's position before the snap also is an indicator of whether Buffalo is running or passing. If Thomas lines up directly behind Kelly, Buffalo usually runs; when he is offset to the right or left, they usually pass. When he lines up as a receiver, they always pass.

Their running plays are fairly basic and usually straight ahead. They have shown some flash, however, including reverses, quarterback options, and direct snaps to Thomas out of Shotgun formation.

This top-rated rushing offense faces its toughest test against the Redskins in Super Bowl XXVI. Washington allowed just 84.1 rushing yards per game, third fewest in the NFL (behind only Philadelphia and New Orleans).

Unlike some teams, the Redskins substitute conservatively, so they are less likely to be affected by the Bills' rapid-fire offense. Buffalo's linemen, however, will have an advantage because of their quickness, an edge that will be even greater on artificial turf.

The Bills have a veteran offensive line, led by guard Jim Ritcher, who earned his first Pro Bowl bid in 1991 after 12 years in the league. Buffalo likes to run left behind Ritcher and tackle Will Wolford.

The center position is manned by Kent Hull, a three-time Pro Bowl player. Glenn Parker, who missed the AFC Championship Game with an injury, is the right guard. Joining Parker on the right side is 6-foot-6, 325-pound tackle Howard Ballard, one of the NFL's best young offensive linemen.

RUSHING

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Thomas	288	1,407	4.9	33	7
Davis	129	624	4.8	t78	4
Gardner	42	146	3.5	18	4
Reed	12	136	11.3	46	0
Kelly	20	45	2.3	12	1
Edwards	1	17	17.0	17	0
Reich	13	6	0.5	8	0

t—touchdown

REDSKINS

The exceptional balance of the Redskins is reflected in their running game. Whether Washington lines up in its standard two-tight end, one-running back set or its Jumbo package with one back and four tight ends, the result is the same: a solid ground attack that pulls no punches, provides few surprises, and gets the job done with amazing consistency.

Earnest Byner has been the Redskins' primary ball carrier this season. He gained more than 1,000 yards (1,048) for the third time in his eight-year career and was selected to his second consecutive Pro Bowl. The 5-foot 10-inch, 218-pound Byner is at his best running between the tackles, the target area of most of Washington's runs, including the Redskins' signature play, the "counter trey." On that play, Byner takes the handoff, makes a false step one way, then goes the other way behind a pulling guard and tackle.

After the Redskins have pounded opponents with Byner, they bring in Ricky Ervins, whose combination of strength and quickness adds an extra dimension to the running game. A third-round draft choice out of USC in 1991, Ervins led all NFC rookie running backs with 680 yards. He also runs well inside, but can bounce outside if the designated hole is closed. He had the Redskins' longest run from scrimmage this season, a 65-yard touchdown burst against the Browns, and gained 104 yards against the Falcons in a divisonal playoff game.

In short-yardage situations, the Redskins rely on Gerald Riggs. Usually supported by at least a trio of tight ends, Riggs is the warhead in the Redskins' Jumbo set. He tied for third in the NFL with 11 rushing touchdowns and helped Washington lead the league in that category with 21.

As much as any of the running backs, Washington's offensive line deserves credit for the team's number-seven ranking in rushing in the NFL. Tackles Jim Lachey and Joe Jacoby, guards Mark Schlereth and Raleigh McKenzie, center Jeff Bostic, and backup Russ Grimm are as dominating a unit as there is in the NFL. Both Lachey and Schlereth were voted to the Pro Bowl. Against the Bills, key matchups on the line are Bostic on nose tackle Jeff Wright and Lachey on defensive end Bruce Smith.

The tight ends—Don Warren, Ron Middleton, Terry Orr, and James Jenkins—also figure prominently in the Washington blocking schemes, occasionally pulling and trapping on counter plays. Look for the tight ends to assume even more responsibility against Buffalo in helping to control marauding linebacker Cornelius Bennett.

Because of the outstanding protection quarterback Mark Rypien receives, he rarely is flushed from the the pocket. Even when he does take off downfield, he is not much of a rushing threat. However, his wide receivers, particularly Ricky Sanders and Art Monk, are effective on reverse plays.

Ron Ross

Running back Earnest Byner gained 1,048 yards in 1991 to lead all Redskins rushers and earn his second consecutive Pro Bowl selection. He ranked fourth among NFC rushers and fifth in the NFL.

RUSHING

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Byner	274	1,048	3.8	32	5
Ervins	145	680	4.7	t65	3
Riggs	78	248	3.2	32	11
Sanders	7	47	6.7	17	1
Monk	9	19	2.1	14	0
Mitchell	3	14	4.7	8	0
Rypien	15	6	0.4	11	1
Clark	1	0	0.0	0	0
Rutledge	8	-13	-1.6	-1	0

t—touchdown

SCOUTING REPORT

PASSING DEFENSE

Tony Tomsic

Leonard Smith is the veteran of the Bills' secondary. The ninth-year safety led the team' defensive backs in tackles with 94. He's had 12 tackles, an interception, and 1½ sacks in the Bills' two postseason games.

BILLS

The Bills ranked eighteenth in the NFL in quarterback sacks and twenty-first in yards allowed. These statistics lose much of their impact when you consider that end Bruce Smith, the NFL's most dominant defensive player in 1990, played in only five games during the 1991 regular season because of a knee problem, and that the Buffalo defense was on the field more than any other team (an average of 33:56 per game).

The significant numbers are Buffalo's touchdown passes allowed (12, which tied them for the league lead) and their 23 interceptions, the NFL's fourth-best total.

Smith, who will play all three positions on the defensive front, and linebacker Cornelius Bennett give the Bills impact players on both ends of their 3-4 alignment.

The loss of Smith for most of the regular season put the spotlight on Bennett, and the fifth-year pro responded with a season that earned him a spot on the AFC Pro Bowl team. He led the Bills in sacks (9) and was third in tackles (107).

To win, the Bills need big games from Smith and Bennett. It would help matters considerably if nose tackle Jeff Wright could win his individual battle with Redskins center Jeff Bostic. Wright missed seven games with a knee injury, but still managed 6 sacks, second to Bennett, and 33 tackles.

Left end Leon Seals was the only defensive lineman to start all 16 regular-season games. Seals (6-5, 270) will face off against Redskins right tackle Joe Jacoby (6-6, 314).

Phil Hansen and Mike Lodish give depth to the defensive line. Both saw extensive duty while Smith and Wright were out.

Bennett is the star of the linebacking corps, and he has a great supporting cast. Darryl Talley, who had 4 sacks during the regular season, made the Pro Bowl this year, Shane Conlan was the team's leading tackler, and Carlton Bailey scored Buffalo's only touchdown in the AFC Championship Game against Denver.

The secondary (cornerbacks Nate Odomes and Kirby Jackson and safeties Mark Kelso and Leonard Smith) is a solid group. Their effectiveness against Art Monk, Gary Clark, and Ricky Sanders will be enhanced if the front line can put pressure on Mark Rypien.

Getting to Rypien will be a formidable challenge. Redskins quarterbacks have been sacked only 9 times in 18 games this year. Washington will commit as many as seven blockers in its protection of Rypien. If the Bills are to pressure him consistently, they will have to blitz.

Buffalo did more blitzing than usual this year, especially from the Nickel package, because of the prolonged absences of Wright and Smith, which weakened the pass rush.

In the Nickel, Bennett becomes a fourth lineman and Bailey leaves in favor of cornerback James Williams. When the situation calls for a sixth defensive back, Clifford Hicks comes on and Conlan goes out.

INTERCEPTIONS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Odomes	5	120	24.0	48	1
Talley	5	45	9.0	13	0
Jackson	4	31	7.8	15	0
L. Smith	3	22	7.3	22	0
Kelso	2	0	0.0	0	0
Bentley	1	58	58.0	58	0
Hale	1	0	0.0	0	0
Hicks	1	0	0.0	0	0
Williams	1	0	0.0	0	0

REDSKINS

The Redskins' pass defense ought to be getting used to this. First Atlanta, then Detroit, and now Buffalo, the latest—and most potent—variation of the Run-and-Shoot.

So far, Washington has come through admirably, limiting the Falcons' Chris Miller to 178 passing yards and intercepting him 4 times, then holding Lions quarterbacks to 232 yards and intercepting 2 passes.

The Redskins finished ninth in the league in pass defense during the regular season, a dramatic improvement over recent history.

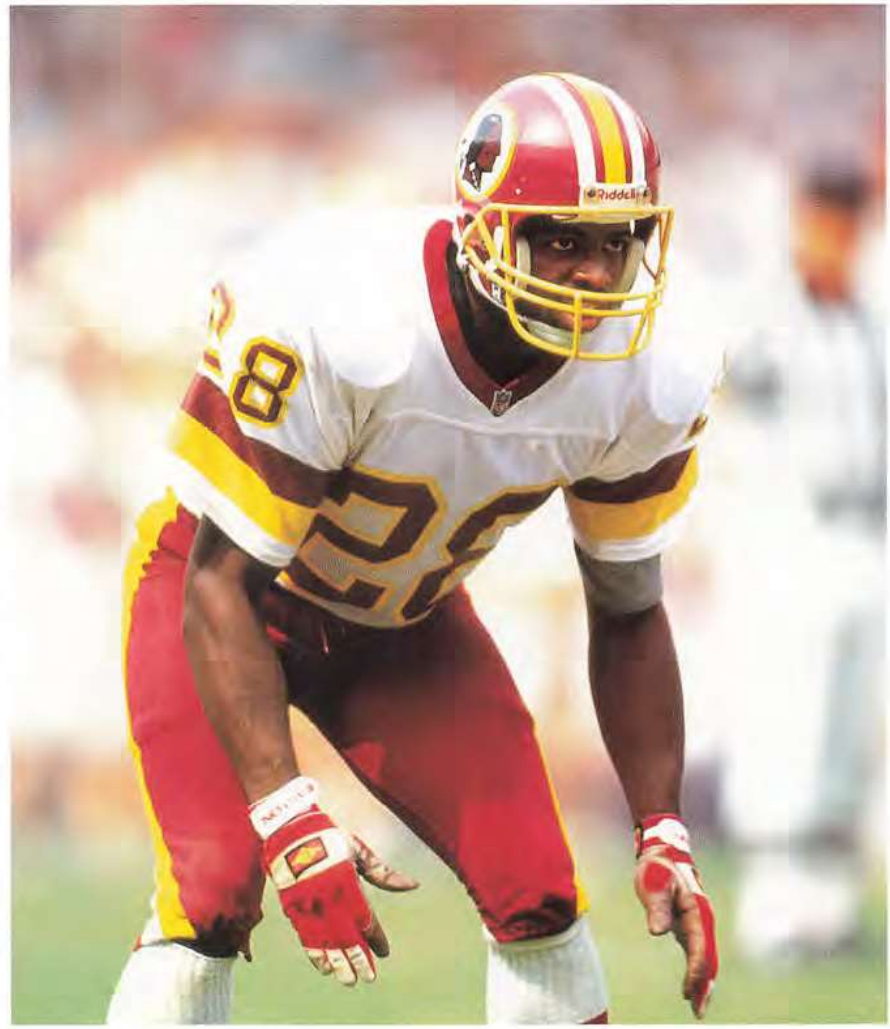
Washington's turnaround this season came with a variety of castoffs. Remember the old Redskins of head coach George Allen—a collection of free agents and retreads who led Washington to Super Bowl VII?

Well, some habits die hard. These Redskins may be a little younger, but Washington still has turned to trades (two starters) and free agents (six) to build its defense.

The starting secondary is stacked with Plan B free agents Danny Copeland, Brad Edwards, and Martin Mayhew. Copeland took over at strong safety for veteran starter Alvin Walton, who spent much of the season on injured reserve with a shoulder injury. Walton suited up for the NFC title game but did not play.

Starting defensive tackles Tim Johnson and Eric Williams came via trades prior to the 1990 season. James Geathers (4½ sacks, 27 hurries), a Plan B signee, is the pass-rush specialist and will replace Williams in those situations. End Fred Stokes (6½ sacks) and outside linebacker Wilber Marshall (5½ sacks, 5 interceptions) were free-agent signees.

Still, Washington's pass defense revolves around 1983 draftees Darrell Green and Charles Mann. Green, a cornerback, is perhaps the top cover man in the NFL, and will go to the Pro Bowl for the fifth time. He had 5 interceptions and 21 passes defensed this year. Mann, who went to three consecutive Pro Bowls (1987-89), was slowed by a bad knee in 1990, but rebounded this year to post 11 sacks and earn another trip to Hawaii.



Bob Rosato

Perhaps best known as the NFL's Fastest Man, Redskins cornerback Darrell Green is also one of the league's top cover men. Green earned the fifth Pro Bowl selection of his career this season.

INTERCEPTIONS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Marshall	5	75	15.0	t54	1
Green	5	47	9.4	24	0
Edwards	4	52	13.0	27	0
Mayhew	3	31	10.3	t31	1
Collins	2	33	16.5	18	1
S. Johnson	2	5	2.5	5	0
Gouveia	1	22	22.0	22	0
T. Johnson	1	14	14.0	14	0
Coleman	1	0	0.0	0	0
Copeland	1	0	0.0	0	0
Mays	1	0	0.0	0	0
Stokes	1	0	0.0	0	0

t—touchdown

The task today will be to put pressure on Bills quarterback Jim Kelly. The Redskins tied for third in the league with 50 sacks and had an astounding (albeit unofficial) 126 quarterback hurries in 1991. Such pressure led to 27 interceptions and a whopping plus-18 turnover differential, which equaled the league high.

Neither Atlanta nor Detroit had success against Washington's five defensive-back formation (Anthony Johnson and Alvoid Mays are the Nickel backs). But both those games were on grass and at RFK Stadium. Kelly and the Bills will not have to weather any outside conditions or unsure footing.

And Buffalo has an additional weapon in the no-huddle offense, which could keep the Redskins from making personnel adjustments in certain situations.

SCOUTING REPORT

RUSHING DEFENSE

Bob Rosato

BILLS

Starting inside linebacker Shane Conlan, along with fellow linebackers Carlton Bailey, Cornelius Bennett, and Darryl Talley, key the Bills' rushing defense. Conlan led the team with 122 total tackles in 1991.

Statistics can be misleading when analyzing the Bills' rushing defense. Buffalo finished a dismal twenty-fourth in the NFL against the run, allowing 127.8 yards per game (in 1990, the Bills gave up only 113.0 yards a game). The dropoff occurred because of knee injuries to two-thirds of Buffalo's outstanding defensive line—end Bruce Smith missed 11 games and nose tackle Jeff Wright 7.

With both players playing regularly again, the rushing defense has solidified. Against Kansas City in the divisional playoffs, Buffalo held the NFL's third-ranked rushing team (138.6 yards a game) to only 77 yards. Against Denver in the AFC Championship Game, the Bills kept Gaston Green and the Broncos' rushing attack (fifth-ranked in the AFC in 1991) in check.

With Washington's explosive running game (an average of 128.1 yards in 1991, third best in the NFC), Buffalo must try to contain the Redskins' trio of dangerous backs—Earnest Byner, Ricky Ervins, and Gerald Riggs. Washington's strength is the constant rotation of Byner and Ervins, and the use of Riggs on short-yardage and goal-line situations, assuring that they always have a fresh back in the game.

The Bills will rely on Wright, Smith, and end Leon Seals, and their group of outstanding linebackers—Cornelius Bennett and Darryl Talley on the outside and Carlton Bailey and Shane Conlan on the inside—to shut down the Redskins' runners and neutralize their huge offensive line. If Buffalo accomplishes this, it could put Washington into a situation it doesn't want to be in—throwing on almost every down.

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Sept. 1 Thurman Thomas gained 165 yards rushing and 103 receiving of the Bills' 583 total yards. Buffalo 35, Miami 31.

Sept. 8 Jim Kelly threw a career-best 6 touchdown passes, including 4 to Don Beebe. Buffalo 52, Pittsburgh 34.

Sept. 15 The offense sputtered before a 15-yard TD pass to Thomas with 4:14 left won it. Buffalo 23, N.Y. Jets 20.

Sept. 22 Keith McKeller's 29-yard catch to end a 76-yard drive kept the Bills unbeaten. Buffalo 17, Tampa Bay 10.

Sept. 29 James Lofton's 77-yard touchdown reception highlighted a 28-point second half. Buffalo 35, Chicago 20.

Oct. 7 The Chiefs sacked Kelly 6 times, recovered 5 fumbles, and allowed just 211 yards. Kansas City 33, Buffalo 6.

Oct. 13 With Kelly sidelined by a first-half concussion, Frank Reich led the Bills to 3 TDs. Buffalo 42, Indianapolis 6.

Oct. 21 After starting with 3 interceptions, Kelly struck for 5 touchdown passes. Buffalo 35, Cincinnati 16.

Nov. 3 Thomas gained 126 yards and Kelly passed for 237, but the Bills had 4 turnovers. Buffalo 22, New England 17.

Nov. 10 Buffalo came from behind twice as Kelly ran for his only TD of the season. Buffalo 34, Green Bay 24.

Nov. 18 The defense got 5 turnovers; linebacker Cornelius Bennett scored on fumble return. Buffalo 41, Miami 27.

Nov. 24 The Patriots intercepted 4 passes and sacked Kelly 4 times. New England 16, Buffalo 13.

Dec. 1 The Bills won their fourth successive division title as Kelly threw his twenty-eighth scoring pass. Buffalo 24, N.Y. Jets 13.

Dec. 8 Scott Norwood missed 3 field goals before connecting from 42 yards. Buffalo 30, L.A. Raiders 27 (OT).

Dec. 15 The Bills raced to a 28-0 halftime lead in a mismatch. Buffalo 35, Indianapolis 7.

Dec. 22 With Kelly, Thomas, and Lofton resting, the Bills generated only 275 yards. Detroit 17, Buffalo 14 (OT).

Jan. 5 Kelly passed for 273 yards and 3 TDs in a payback for an earlier 33-6 loss. Buffalo 37, Kansas City 14.

Jan. 12 Carlton Bailey intercepted a pass for a score and Norwood added a field goal as the Bills held off the Broncos in the AFC Championship Game. Buffalo 10, Denver 7.

REDSKINS

The battle for control of the line of scrimmage when the Bills try to run the ball may be the key to which team wins today's game.

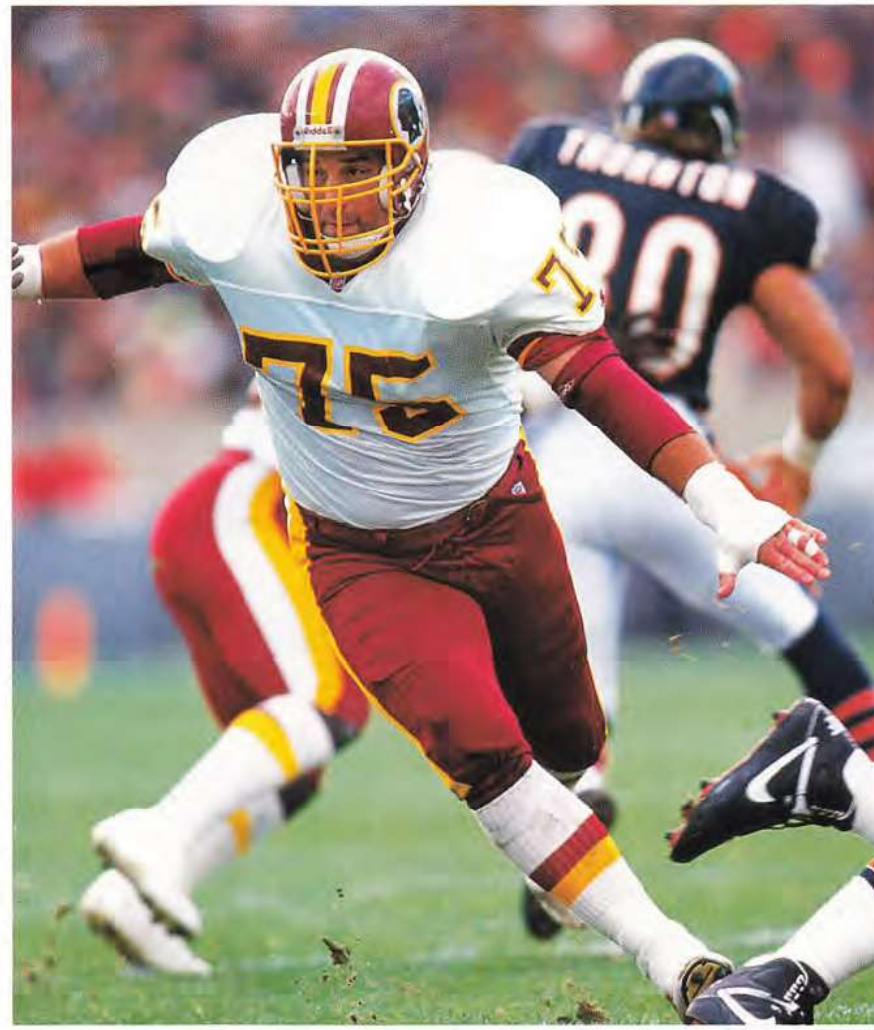
The Redskins, who ranked third in the NFL against the run in 1991, allowing only 84.1 yards a game (the league average was 107.7), must contain Buffalo's potent ground game, which led the league with an average of 148.8 yards.

The man the Redskins must stop is the Bills' elusive running back, Thurman Thomas, the AFC's leading rusher with 1,407 yards.

Don't expect to see Richie Petitbon, Washington's assistant head coach for defense, to put in a lot of new defensive schemes in an effort to shut down the Bills' rushing offense. The Redskins probably will stick to their standard 4-3 alignment, which proved quite successful against the run during the regular season.

The starting defensive line is a solid group, with ends Charles Mann and Fred Stokes, and tackles Eric Williams and Tim Johnson. Mann, a four-time Pro Bowl selection, and Williams are the strength of the unit. Both are exceptionally quick with great lateral movement.

The linebackers are led by the team's two leading tacklers, Andre Collins (151 total tackles) and Wilber Marshall (135). Both players are hard hitters who react well to the ball.



Scott Cunningham

Danny Copeland and Brad Edwards, a pair of free-agent safeties, both are sure tacklers who aggressively come up and support the run defense.

Overpowering defensive tackle Eric Williams helped Washington limit opponents to 84.1 rushing yards per game, third best in the NFL. Williams finished second among Redskins defensive linemen with 64 tackles.

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Sept. 1 "Everything we did worked," said head coach Joe Gibbs. "It was a perfect night." Washington 45, Detroit 0.

Sept. 9 Chip Lohmiller had 4 field goals and Mark Rypien 2 touchdown passes. Washington 33, Dallas 31.

Sept. 15 Defense got 4 turnovers; one of Wilber Marshall's 2 interceptions went for score. Washington 34, Phoenix 0.

Sept. 22 Gerald Riggs ran for 3 touchdowns, the last to break a tie with 2:02 left. Washington 34, Cincinnati 27.

Sept. 30 In their third shutout in 5 games, the Redskins outgained the Eagles 354-89. Washington 23, Philadelphia 0.

Oct. 6 Rypien fired 2 touchdown passes to Art Monk. Defense came up with 4 turnovers. Washington 20, Chicago 7.

Oct. 13 Rookie Ricky Ervins rushed for 133 yards and 2 touchdowns. Washington 42, Cleveland 17.

Oct. 27 Rypien's 2 second-half scoring passes to Gary Clark helped erase a 13-0 deficit. Washington 17, N.Y. Giants 13.

Nov. 3 Darrell Green intercepted first pass in overtime; Lohmiller hit 41-yard field goal. Washington 16, Houston 13.

Nov. 10 Rypien passed for 442 yards and 6 touchdowns (3 to Clark), and ran for another. Washington 56, Atlanta 17.

Nov. 17 Riggs scored 2 touchdowns, Monk, Clark, and Sanders 1 each, to gain playoffs. Washington 41, Pittsburgh 14.

Nov. 24 Dallas's Emmitt Smith ran for 132 yards; Redskins held to 50 rushing yards. Dallas 24, Washington 21.

Dec. 1 Redskins won division with no-huddle offense, Sanders and Ervins scored touchdowns. Washington 27, L.A. Rams 6.

Dec. 8 Behind 14-0 in the second half, Rypien rallied the Redskins. Washington 20, Phoenix 14.

Dec. 15 Earnest Byner surpassed 1,000 yards rushing; Clark caught 2 scoring passes. Washington 34, N.Y. Giants 17.

Dec. 22 Roger Ruzek's 38-yard field goal eclipsed 5 by Lohmiller. Philadelphia 24, Washington 22.

Jan. 4 The defense forced 6 turnovers (4 interceptions); Ervins rushed for 104 yards. Washington 24, Atlanta 7.

Jan. 12 Washington jumped to a 10-0 lead in the first five minutes of the game to easily win the NFC Championship Game. Washington 41, Detroit 10.

SCOUTING REPORT

SPECIAL TEAMS

David Drapkin

BILLS

Although he is listed as a wide receiver, Steve Tasker is known for his relentless effort on special teams. In 1991, he was selected to his third Pro Bowl (second consecutive) as the AFC's special-teams player.

Buffalo's high-powered offense put a lot of games out of reach by halftime during the 1991 season. But when the offense sputtered, the Bills' special teams rose to the occasion—especially in the AFC Championship Game. Facing a brisk wind, kicker Scott Norwood converted a 44-yard field goal that provided the margin of victory in the Bills' 10-7 win over Denver.

The regular season had similar scenarios. Buffalo secured home-field advantage throughout the playoffs when Norwood made a 42-yard field goal in overtime to give the Bills a 30-27 victory over the Raiders. Wide receiver Al Edwards, who became Buffalo's starting kickoff returner at midseason after Eddie Fuller was injured, also contributed to the crucial win, returning a kickoff 91 yards for a touchdown.

In week 3 against the Jets, Norwood made 3 field goals and the Bills won 23-20. Even in a losing effort, special teams kept the Bills in the game. At New England, Buffalo raced to a 10-0 lead after James Williams blocked the Patriots' 51-yard field-goal attempt—setting up a field goal by Norwood. Then after Pro Bowl special-teams player Steve Tasker blocked a New England punt, the Bills scored a touchdown. Later, Buffalo nose tackle Jeff Wright blocked an extra-point attempt. Still, the Bills lost 16-13.

One of the key moves on special teams came when the Bills claimed Brad Daluiso off waivers in September to handle kickoff duties. His strong leg aided already brilliant kickoff-coverage led by Tasker (17 tackles), Ray Bentley (16), Hal Garner (14), and Carwell Gardner (14). Daluiso had 26 touchbacks in 78 kickoffs.

Norwood was inconsistent for much of the season. Against the Raiders, for example, he missed 3 field goals and an extra point before making the game-winning kick. Although he converted only 62 percent of his tries during the regular season, Norwood was perfect in the playoffs. He is the Bills' all-time scoring leader in postseason with 60 points.

Edwards, a second-year player, finished seventh in the AFC with a 20.1-yard average on kickoff returns, but he muffed 2 punts at midseason and was replaced as the starting punt returner by Clifford Hicks. Chris Mohr gives the Bills a reliable punter—he was the only AFC punter who set up more fair catches than returns. Mohr didn't have a kick blocked, placing 12 inside the opposing team's 20-yard line.

On kick coverage, the Bills allowed an NFL-low 3.5 yards per punt return, and very few teams started an offensive series beyond their own 20-yard line after kickoffs. Overall, Buffalo didn't surrender a touchdown on a kickoff or punt return.

KICKING GAME & RETURNS

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	In 20	Long	Block
Mohr	54	2,085	38.6	12	58	0

PUNT RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Edwards	13	9	69	5.3	21	0
Hicks	12	7	203	16.9	59	0
Odomes	1	0	9	9.0	9	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Edwards	31	623	20.1	t91	1
Fuller	8	125	15.6	22	0
Beebe	7	121	17.3	24	0
Davis	4	73	18.3	23	0
Taylor	1	18	18.0	18	0
Gardner	1	10	10.0	10	0

FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Norwood	1/1	7/8	3/7	5/9	2/4	18/29

t—touchdown

REDSKINS

No special-teams player had more of an impact on his team's success than Redskins kicker Chip Lohmiller. Like fine wine, Lohmiller gets better each year, and, after leading the NFC in scoring and field goals in 1990, the fourth-year player from the University of Minnesota led the league in both of those departments (149 points and 31 field goals, respectively) in 1991 (he shared the field goal lead with Miami's Pete Stoyanovich).

En route to earning his first trip to the Pro Bowl, Lohmiller also became the first player since 1945 to outscore an NFL team when the Indianapolis Colts finished with only 143 points.

Always coming through in the clutch, Lohmiller's 4 field goals, including 2 of more than 50 yards, propelled the Redskins to a 33-31 win over Dallas in week 2, and his 41-yard field goal in overtime lifted Washington to a 16-13 win over Houston in week 9. Because he played in the Metrodome as a collegian, returning to Minneapolis should be quite a homecoming for Lohmiller. In his junior year, he connected on a 62-yard field goal against Iowa in the building.

When Lohmiller wasn't making kicks this season, kick returner Brian Mitchell was busy returning them. Mitchell finished second in the league in punt returns (13.3-yard average) and eighth in the NFC in kickoff returns (20.1-yard average).

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Kick returner Brian Mitchell is a big play waiting to happen. He finished second in the league in punt returns with a 13.3-yard average and eighth in the NFC in kickoff returns with a 20.1-yard average.

Mitchell started on a high note with a spectacular 69-yard punt return for a score in the Redskins' 45-0 season-opening victory over Detroit. The former Southwestern Louisiana quarterback doesn't limit his special-teams exploits to just kick returns; he also plays on the Redskins' punt and kickoff teams. His 26 special-teams tackles demonstrate that he's often one of the first players down field on kick coverage.

Backup tight end John Brandes and wide receiver Stephen Hobbs make the most of their limited playing time by wreaking havoc as special-teams players. Brandes, who also doubles as the team's long snapper for punts and kicks, led the special teams with 43 tackles. A hustler who doesn't quit until a whistle has blown, Brandes often is knocked on his backside after snapping for punts, yet he always manages to be around the football. Although Hobbs has been unable to break into the ranks of the Posse, he has proven to be a consistent special-teams player who rarely misses tackles.

If the Redskins' special teams have a weakness, it's punting. Kelly Goodburn averaged only 39.8 yards per punt in 1991. Goodburn also had 3 of his punts blocked. If Washington doesn't do a better job of protecting him, Buffalo special-teams ace Steve Tasker could have a field day.

KICKING GAME & RETURNS

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	In 20	Long	Block
Goodburn	52	2,070	39.8	16	61	3

PUNT RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Mitchell	45	21	600	13.3	t69	2
Hobbs	1	0	10	10.0	10	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Mitchell	29	583	20.1	35	0
Ervins	11	232	21.1	46	0
Jo. Johnson	5	83	16.6	25	0
Gouveia	3	12	4.0	9	0
Hobbs	1	16	16.0	16	0

FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Lohmiller	0/0	9/9	10/12	10/17	2/5	31/43

t—touchdown

How They Were Built

BILLS

Year	Draft (28)	Trade (3)	Free Agents (14)/Waivers (2)
1980 11-6 1st, AFC East	G Jim Ritcher (1)		
1981 11-7 3rd, AFC East			
1982 4-5 9th, AFC Regular Season			
1983 8-8 3rd, AFC East	QB Jim Kelly (1B) LB Darryl Talley (2)		
1984 2-14 5th, AFC East	S Dwight Drane (Supp. 1)		
1985 2-14 5th, AFC East	DE Bruce Smith (1A) QB Frank Reich (3A) LB Hal Garner (3B) WR Andre Reed (4A)	TE Pete Metzelaars (from Seattle)	K Scott Norwood
1986 4-12 4th, AFC East	T Will Wolford (1B) DE Mark Pike (7B) TE Butch Rolle (7C)		LB Ray Bentley C Kent Hull S Mark Kelso WR Steve Tasker (waivers)
1987 7-8 4th, AFC East	LB Shane Conlan (1) CB Nate Odomes (2A) DE Leon Seals (4B) TE Keith McKeller (9) T Howard Ballard (11)	LB Cornelius Bennett (from Indianapolis)	CB Kirby Jackson
1988 13-5 1st, AFC East	RB Thurman Thomas (2) NT Jeff Wright (8B) LB Carlton Bailey (9)	S Leonard Smith (from Phoenix)	C-T Mitch Frerotte
1989 9-8 1st, AFC East	WR Don Beebe (3)		RB Kenneth Davis QB Gale Gilbert C Adam Lingner WR James Lofton
1990 15-4 AFC Champions	CB James Williams (1) RB Carwell Gardner (2) T Glenn Parker (3) LB Marvcus Patton (8) NT Mike Lodish (10) WR Al Edwards (11)		CB Clifford Hicks T-G Joe Staysniak
1991 15-3 AFC Champions	CB-S Henry Jones (1) DE Phil Hansen (2)		T Mike Brennan K Brad Daluiso (waivers) P Chris Mohr

Bills Staff

Marv Levy ..... Vice President/Head Coach
Tom Bresnahan ..... Assistant Coach
Walt Corey ..... Assistant Coach
Bruce DeHaven ..... Assistant Coach
Chuck Dickerson ..... Assistant Coach
Rusty Jones ..... Assistant Coach
Don Lawrence ..... Assistant Coach
Chuck Lester ..... Assistant Coach
Ted Marchibroda ..... Assistant Coach
Nick Nicolau ..... Assistant Coach
Elijah Pitts ..... Assistant Coach
Dick Roach ..... Assistant Coach

CLUB PERSONNEL

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr ..... President
Bill Polian ..... Vice President/General Manager
Linda Bogdan ..... Corporate Vice President
Jeffrey C. Littmann ..... Treasurer
Bob Ferguson ..... Assistant G.M./Director of Pro Personnel
Bill Munson ..... Assistant G.M./Business Operations
Ed Stillwell ..... Director of Administration
Jim Overdorf ..... Business Manager
Christy Wilson ..... Executive Asst. to General Manager
Patricia Kaczor ..... Secretary (General Manager)
Mary Tash ..... Secretary (Asst. General Manager)
Linda Turello ..... Secretary (Operations)
John Butler ..... Director of Player Personnel
A.J. Smith ..... Assistant Director/College Scouting
Dave Gettleman ..... College Scout
Bob Ryan ..... College Scout
Chink Sengel ..... College Scout
Dave Smith ..... College Scout
Bob Windish ..... College Scout
Jacky Kosmowski ..... Scouting Administrative Assistant
Doug Majeski ..... Scouting Administrative Assistant
Colleen McCarville ..... Scouting Administrative Assistant
Michele Overdorf ..... Scouting Administrative Assistant
Bob Schatz ..... Scouting Administrative Assistant
Ed Abramoski ..... Head Trainer
Bud Carpenter ..... Assistant Trainer
Bill Ford ..... Assistant Trainer
Dave Hojnowski ..... Equipment Manager
Randy Ribbeck ..... Assistant Equipment Manager
Henry Kunttu ..... Video Director
Dennis Cianfrini ..... Video Assistant
Jerry Foran ..... Director of Marketing/Sales
Kathy Buechi ..... Secretary/Assistant
Paul McDonnell ..... Assistant
Denny Lynch ..... Director of Public/Community Relations
Scott Berchtold ..... Director of Media Relations
Cathy Spencer ..... Office Manager
June Foran ..... Box Office Controller
Debbi Cummins ..... Assistant
Karen Renzi ..... Assistant
Kristin Fiegel ..... Assistant
Amy Gomikiewicz ..... Assistant
Sharon Hart ..... Assistant
Chris Hauret ..... Assistant
Don Purdy ..... Assistant
Steve Champlin ..... Director of Stadium Operations
George Koch ..... Manager of Engineering
Tom Christen ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Art Hauret ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Paul Kofink ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Kevin Raden ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Denise Stanley ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Kim Ziccardi ..... Stadium Operations Staff
Debbie Gang ..... Receptionist
Tim Maloney ..... Entertainment Director
Joe Niland ..... Transportation
Dr. Richard Weiss ..... Team Physician
Dr. Joseph Armenia ..... Associate Team Physician
Nancy Hermann ..... Secretary (Coaches)
Nina Laur ..... Secretary (Head Coach)

REDSKINS

Redskins Staff

Joe Gibbs	Vice President/Head Coach
Don Breaux	Assistant Coach
Jack Burns	Assistant Coach
Bobby DePaul	Assistant Coach
Rod Dowhower	Assistant Coach
Jim Hanifan	Assistant Coach
Larry Peccatiello	Assistant Coach
Richie Petitbon	Assistant Coach
Dan Riley	Assistant Coach
Wayne Sevier	Assistant Coach
Warren Simmons	Assistant Coach
Charley Taylor	Assistant Coach
Emmitt Thomas	Assistant Coach
LaVern Torgeson	Assistant Coach
Steve Wetzel	Assistant Coach
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Jack Kent Cooke	Chairman of the Board/CEO
John Kent Cooke, Sr.	Executive Vice President
Ralph Kent Cooke	Board Member
James Lacher	Board Member
Stuary Haney	Secretary
Greg Dillon	Controller
Charlie Casserly	General Manager
Bobby Mitchell	Assistant General Manager
Kirk Mee	Director of Player Personnel
George Saimes	Director of College Scouting
Joe Mack	Director of Pro Scouting
Gene Bates	College Scout
Larry Bryan	College Scout
Mike Hagen	College Scout
Miller McCalmon	College Scout
Chuck Banker	Pro Scout
Charlie Dayton	Vice President of Communications
Mike McCall	Director of Media Relations
John Autry	Director of Information
John Kent Cooke, Jr.	Dir. of Stadium Oper./Club Promotions
Sue Barton	Ticket Manager
Larry Desautels	Assistant
Tony Lyman	Assistant
Lamar (Bubba) Tyer	Head Trainer
Al Bellamy	Assistant Trainer
Kevin Bastin	Assistant Trainer
Donnie Schoenmann	Director of Video/Photography
Hugh McPhillips	Assistant
Scott Cunningham	Still Photography
Jay Brunetti	Equipment Manager
Jeff Parsons	Assistant Equipment Manager
Ed Allen	Assistant Equipment Manager
John Jenkins	Assistant Equipment Manager
Lego Lamb	Assistant Equipment Manager
Dr. Donald Knowlan	Team Doctor/Internist
Dr. Charles Jackson	Team Doctor/Orthopedic Surgeon
Dr. Barry Rudolph	Team Dentist
Dean Borden	Secretary (Executive Vice President)
Linda York	Secretary (Controller)
Barbara Frye	Secretary (General Manager/Scouting Staff)
Barbara Sevier	Secretary (Head Coach)
Pat White	Secretary (Accounting)
Phyllis Hayes	Secretary (Public Relations)
Kelly Peucker	Receptionist
Kathy Shumate	Secretary (Tickets)

Year	Draft (20)	Trade (6)	Free Agents (21)
1979 10-6 3rd, NFC East	TE Don Warren (4) LB Monte Coleman (11)		
1980 6-10 3rd, NFC East	WR Art Monk (1)		C Jeff Bostic
1981 8-8 4th, NFC East	G Russ Grimm (3)		G-T Joe Jacoby
1982 12-1 Super Bowl XVII Champions			
1983 16-3 NFC Champions	CB Darrell Green (1) DE Charles Mann (3)		
1984 11-5 1st, NFC East			
1985 10-6 3rd, NFC East	C-G Raleigh McKenzie (11)		WR Gary Clark
1986 12-4 2nd, NFC East	S Alvin Walton (3) LB Ravin Caldwell (5) QB Mark Rypien (6) LB Kurt Gouveia (8)	WR Ricky Sanders (from New England)	
1987 14-4 Super Bowl XXII Champions	T Ed Simmons (6B)		
1988 7-9 3rd, NFC East	K Chip Lohmiller (2) QB Stan Humphries (6)	T Jim Lachey (from L.A. Raiders)	LB Wilber Marshall
1989 10-6 3rd, NFC East	CB Anthony Johnson (6) G Mark Schlereth (10)	RB Earnest Byner (from Cleveland) RB Gerald Riggs (from Atlanta)	WR Stephen Hobbs CB Martin Mayhew DE Fred Stokes
1990 11-7 2nd, NFC East	LB Andre Collins (2) RB Brian Mitchell (5)	DT Tim Johnson (from Pittsburgh) DT Eric Williams (from Detroit)	G Mark Adickes TE John Brandes S Brad Edwards DT James Geathers CB Sidney Johnson CB Alvoid Mays TE Ron Middleton QB Jeff Rutledge
1991 16-2 NFC Champions	DT Bobby Wilson (1) RB Ricky Ervins (3)		DE Jason Buck S Danny Copeland P Kelly Goodburn TE James Jenkins LB Matt Millen TE Terry Orr

Photography by Ed Mahan

REGGIE WHITE

"A lot of people ask me how can I play with so much aggressiveness and intensity on the field and still be a Christian. I tell them it's my nature to be aggressive .... I aggressively present the gospel to others in hope that my love for the Lord will impact others' lives."

Previous AIA Bart Starr Award Winners:

1989 Steve Largent
1990 Anthony Munoz
1991 Mike Singletary

Athletes in Action

REGGIE WHITE

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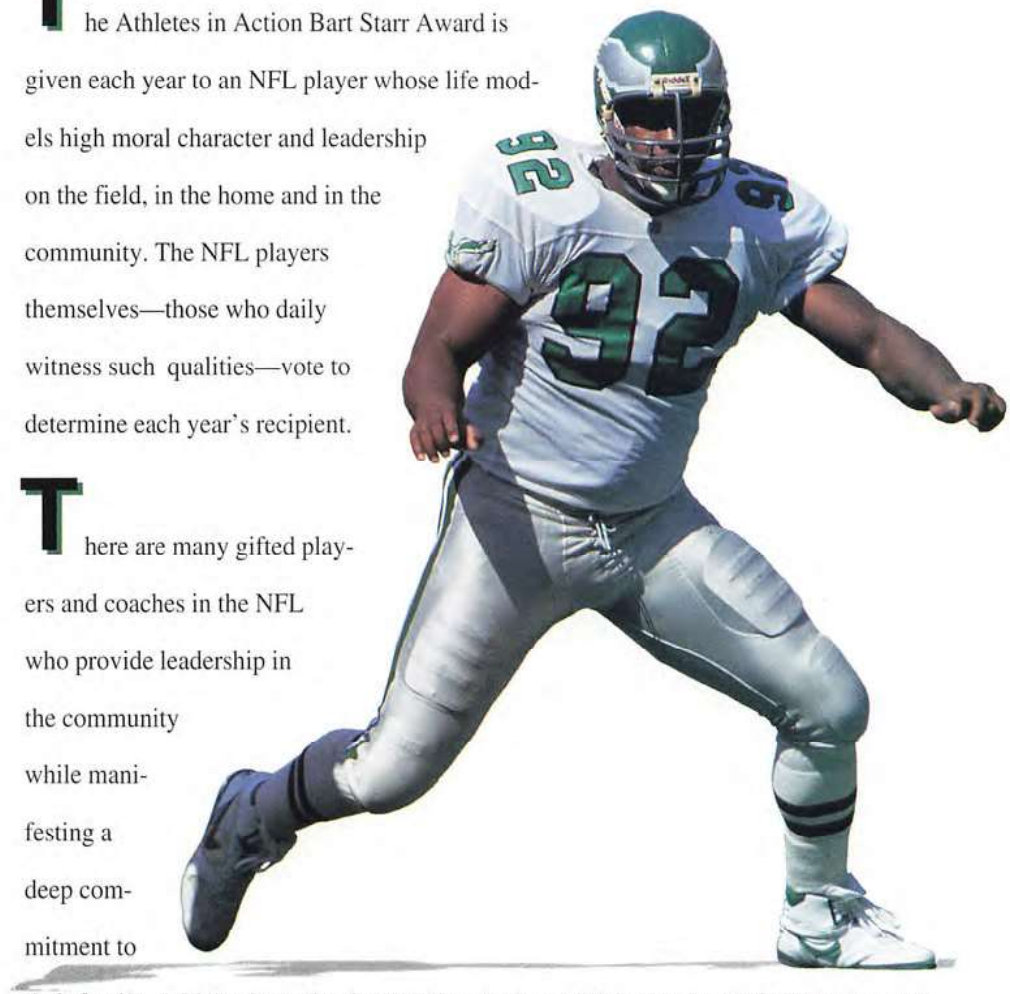
The Athletes in Action Bart Starr Award is given each year to an NFL player whose life models high moral character and leadership on the field, in the home and in the community. The NFL players themselves—those who daily witness such qualities—vote to determine each year's recipient.



There are many gifted players and coaches in the NFL who provide leadership in the community while manifesting a deep commitment to their family. Athletes in Action honors Reggie as a positive role model for today's youth.

Athletes in Action is made up of athletes who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This has provided them with significance, purpose and victory in the game of life.

This ad is brought to you by the following NFL players and team Bible studies: Cleveland Browns' Bible study, Buffalo Bills' Bible study, Lloyd Burrus, Bobby Butler, Scott Case, Deron Cherry, Dallas Cowboys' Bible study, Detroit Lions' Bible study, Pat Eilers Green Bay Packers' Bible study, Emile Harry, Garry Howe, Tunch Ilkin, Brent Jones, Harper Lebel, Tim McKyre, New York Giants' Bible study, New York Jets' Bible study, Stephen Paige, Steve Pelluer and Dwight Stone ▲

BILLS PLAYERS AND STAFF

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.
President & Owner

Bill Polian
Vice President/GM

Linda Bogdan
Corporate Vice President

Marv Levy
Vice President/Head Coach

Bill Munson
Asst. GM/Business Operations

Bob Ferguson
Asst. GM/Pro Personnel

John Butler
Director of Player Personnel

Denny Lynch
Director of Public Relations

Jim Overdorf
Business Manager

5 Brad Daluiso
Kicker

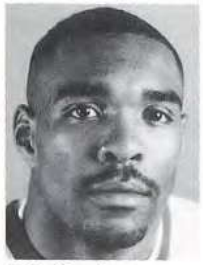
7 Gale Gilbert
Quarterback

9 Chris Mohr
Punter

11 Scott Norwood
Kicker

12 Jim Kelly
Quarterback

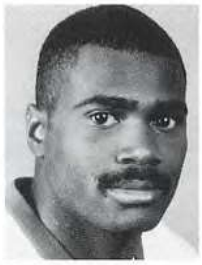
14 Frank Reich
Quarterback



20 Henry Jones
Cornerback-Safety

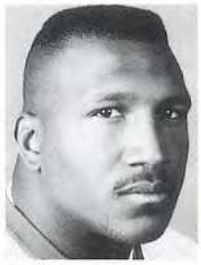
23 Kenneth Davis
Running Back

27 Clifford Hicks
Cornerback



31 James Williams
Cornerback

34 Thurman Thomas
Running Back



35 Carwell Gardner
Running Back

37 Nate Odomes
Cornerback

38 Mark Kelso
Safety

45 Dwight Drane
Safety

46 Leonard Smith
Safety

47 Kirby Jackson
Safety

50 Ray Bentley
Linebacker

51 Jim Ritcher
Guard

53 Marvcus Patton
Linebacker

54 Carlton Bailey
Linebacker

56 Darryl Talley
Linebacker

58 Shane Conlan
Linebacker

59 Mitch Frerotte
Center-Tackle

63 Adam Lingner
Center

64 Mike Brennan
Tackle

67 Kent Hull
Center

69 Will Wolford
Tackle

73 Mike Lodish
Nose Tackle

74 Glenn Parker
Guard-Tackle

75 Howard Ballard
Tackle

78 Bruce Smith
Defensive End

80 James Lofton
Wide Receiver

82 Don Beebe
Wide Receiver

83 Andre Reed
Wide Receiver

84 Keith McKeller
Tight End

85 Al Edwards
Wide Receiver

87 Butch Rolle
Tight End

88 Pete Metzelaars
Tight End

89 Steve Tasker
Wide Receiver

90 Phil Hansen
Defensive End

91 Jeff Wright
Nose Tackle

94 Mark Pike
Defensive End

96 Leon Seals
Defensive End

97 Cornelius Bennett
Linebacker

99 Hal Garner
Linebacker

Tom Bresnahan
Assistant Coach

Walt Corey
Assistant Coach

Bruce DeHaven
Assistant Coach

Chuck Dickerson
Assistant Coach

Rusty Jones
Assistant Coach

Don Lawrence
Assistant Coach

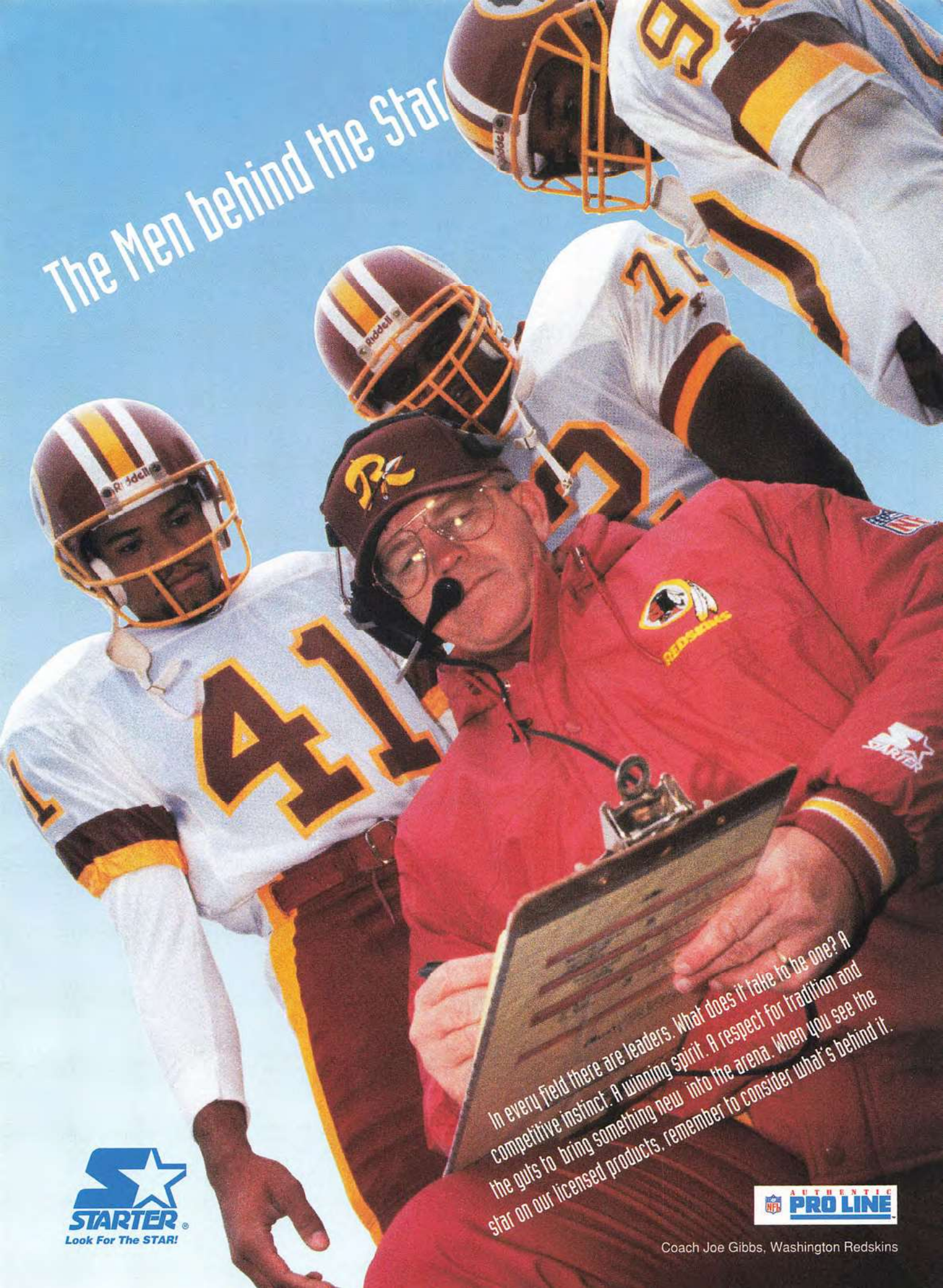
Chuck Lester
Assistant Coach

Ted Marchibroda
Assistant Coach

Nick Nicolau
Assistant Coach

Elijah Pitts
Assistant Coach

Dick Roach
Assistant Coach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BUFFALO BILLS

Alphabetical Roster

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
54	Bailey, Carlton	LB	6-3	235	12/15/64	4	North Carolina
75	Ballard, Howard	T	6-6	325	11/3/63	4	Alabama A&M
82	Beebe, Don	WR	5-11	183	12/18/64	3	Chadron St. (Neb.)
97	Bennett, Cornelius	LB	6-2	236	8/25/66	5	Alabama
50	Bentley, Ray	LB	6-2	235	11/25/60	6	Central Michigan
64	Brennan, Mike	T	6-5	282	3/22/67	2	Notre Dame
58	Conlan, Shane	LB	6-3	230	3/4/64	5	Penn State
5	Daluiso, Brad	K	6-2	208	12/31/67	R	UCLA
23	Davis, Kenneth	RB	5-10	209	4/16/62	6	Texas Christian
45	Drane, Dwight	S	6-2	205	5/6/62	6	Oklahoma
85	Edwards, Al	WR	5-8	171	5/18/67	2	Northwestern La.
59	Frerotte, Mitch	C-T	6-3	285	3/30/65	3	Penn State
35	Gardner, Carwell	RB	6-2	232	11/27/66	2	Louisville
99	Garner, Hal	LB	6-4	235	1/18/62	6	Utah State
7	Gilbert, Gale	QB	6-3	210	12/20/61	5	California
90	Hansen, Phil	DE	6-5	258	5/20/68	R	North Dakota State
27	Hicks, Clifford	CB	5-10	188	8/18/64	5	Oregon
67	Hull, Kent	C	6-5	275	1/13/61	6	Mississippi State
47	Jackson, Kirby	CB	5-10	180	2/2/65	5	Mississippi State
20	Jones, Henry	CB-S	6-0	197	12/29/67	R	Illinois
12	Kelly, Jim	QB	6-3	218	2/14/60	6	Miami
38	Kelso, Mark	S	5-11	185	7/23/63	6	William & Mary
63	Lingner, Adam	C	6-4	263	11/2/60	9	Illinois
73	Lodish, Mike	NT	6-3	265	8/11/67	2	UCLA
80	Lofton, James	WR	6-3	190	7/5/56	14	Stanford
84	McKeller, Keith	TE	6-4	245	7/9/64	4	Jacksonville State
88	Metzelaars, Pete	TE	6-7	250	5/24/60	10	Wabash
9	Mohr, Chris	P	6-5	215	5/11/66	2	Alabama
11	Norwood, Scott	K	6-0	207	7/17/60	7	James Madison
37	Odomes, Nate	CB	5-10	188	8/25/65	5	Wisconsin
74	Parker, Glenn	G-T	6-5	301	4/22/66	2	Arizona
53	Patton, Marvcus	LB	6-2	226	5/1/67	2	UCLA
94	Pike, Mark	DE	6-4	272	12/27/63	5	Georgia Tech
83	Reed, Andre	WR	6-2	190	1/29/64	7	Kutztown State
14	Reich, Frank	QB	6-4	210	12/4/61	7	Maryland
51	Ritcher, Jim	G	6-3	273	5/21/58	12	North Carolina State
87	Rolle, Butch	TE	6-4	245	8/19/64	6	Michigan State
96	Seals, Leon	DE	6-5	270	1/30/64	5	Jackson State
78	Smith, Bruce	DE	6-4	275	6/18/63	7	Virginia Tech
46	Smith, Leonard	S	5-11	202	9/2/60	9	McNeese State
79	Staysniak, Joe	G-T	6-5	298	12/8/66	1	Ohio State
56	Talley, Darryl	LB	6-4	235	7/10/60	9	West Virginia
89	Tasker, Steve	WR	5-9	183	4/10/62	7	Northwestern
34	Thomas, Thurman	RB	5-10	198	5/16/66	4	Oklahoma State
31	Williams, James	CB	5-10	172	3/30/67	2	Fresno State
69	Wolford, Will	T	6-5	295	5/18/64	6	Vanderbilt
91	Wright, Jeff	NT	6-3	270	6/13/63	4	Central Missouri State

Depth Chart

OFFENSE			
WR	**—80 James Lofton**	82 Don Beebe	89 Steve Tasker
LT	**—69 Will Wolford**	59 Mitch Frerotte	64 Mike Brennan
LG	**—51 Jim Ritcher**	79 Joe Staysniak	
C	**—67 Kent Hull**	59 Mitch Frerotte	63 Adam Lingner
RG	**—74 Glenn Parker**	79 Joe Staysniak	
RT	**—75 Howard Ballard**	59 Mitch Frerotte	64 Mike Brennan
TE	**—84 Keith McKeller**	88 Pete Metzelaars	87 Butch Rolle
WR	**—83 Andre Reed**	85 Al Edwards	89 Steve Tasker
QB	**—12 Jim Kelly**	14 Frank Reich	7 Gale Gilbert
RB	**—34 Thurman Thomas**	23 Kenneth Davis	
RB	**—35 Carwell Gardner**	23 Kenneth Davis	
DEFENSE			
LE	**—96 Leon Seals**	94 Mark Pike	
NT	**—91 Jeff Wright**	73 Mike Lodish	
RE	**—78 Bruce Smith**	90 Phil Hansen	
LOLB	**—97 Cornelius Bennett**	99 Hal Garner	
LILB	**—58 Shane Conlan**	50 Ray Bentley	
RILB	**—54 Carlton Bailey**	50 Ray Bentley	
ROLB	**—56 Darryl Talley**	53 Marvcus Patton	
LCB	**—47 Kirby Jackson**	31 James Williams	
RCB	**—37 Nate Odomes**	27 Clifford Hicks	
SS	**—46 Leonard Smith**	45 Dwight Drane	20 Henry Jones
FS	**—38 Mark Kelso**	45 Dwight Drane	
SPECIALISTS			
P	**— 9 Chris Mohr**		
K	**—11 Scott Norwood**	5 Brad Daluiso	
H	**—14 Frank Reich**	7 Gale Gilbert	
PC	**—63 Adam Lingner**	67 Kent Hull	
KC	**—63 Adam Lingner**	67 Kent Hull	
PR	**—27 Clifford Hicks**	85 Al Edwards	37 Nate Odomes
KR	**—85 Al Edwards**	23 Kenneth Davis	

Bold Face—Starters

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*1992 Oldsmobile Eighty Eight Royale EPA estimated MPG 18 city/28 hwy. **Optional on base model.

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THE POWER OF INTELLIGENT ENGINEERING.

AFC

Starting Lineups

BUFFALO BILLS

OFFENSE

80	James Lofton	WR
69	Will Wolford	LT
51	Jim Ritcher	LG
67	Kent Hull	C
74	Glenn Parker	RG
75	Howard Ballard	RT
84	Keith McKeller	TE
83	Andre Reed	WR
12	Jim Kelly	QB
34	Thurman Thomas	RB
35	Carwell Gardner	RB

DEFENSE

96	Leon Seals	LE
91	Jeff Wright	NT
78	Bruce Smith	RE
97	Cornelius Bennett	LOLB
58	Shane Conlan	LILB
54	Carlton Bailey	RILB
56	Darryl Talley	ROLB
47	Kirby Jackson	LCB
37	Nate Odomes	RCB
46	Leonard Smith	SS
38	Mark Kelso	FS

BILLS NUMERICAL ROSTER

5	Brad Daluiso	K
7	Gale Gilbert	QB
9	Chris Mohr	P
11	Scott Norwood	K
12	Jim Kelly	QB
14	Frank Reich	QB
20	Henry Jones	CB-S
23	Kenneth Davis	RB
27	Clifford Hicks	CB
31	James Williams	CB
34	Thurman Thomas	RB
35	Carwell Gardner	RB
37	Nate Odomes	CB
38	Mark Kelso	S
45	Dwight Drane	S
46	Leonard Smith	S
47	Kirby Jackson	CB
50	Ray Bentley	LB
51	Jim Ritcher	G
53	Marvcus Patton	LB
54	Carlton Bailey	LB
56	Darryl Talley	LB
58	Shane Conlan	LB
59	Mitch Frerotte	C-T
63	Adam Lingner	C
64	Mike Brennan	T
67	Kent Hull	C
69	Will Wolford	T
73	Mike Lodish	NT
74	Glenn Parker	G-T
75	Howard Ballard	T
78	Bruce Smith	DE
79	Joe Staysniak	G-T
80	James Lofton	WR
82	Don Beebe	WR
83	Andre Reed	WR
84	Keith McKeller	TE
85	Al Edwards	WR
87	Butch Rolle	TE
88	Pete Metzelaars	TE
89	Steve Tasker	WR
90	Phil Hansen	DE
91	Jeff Wright	NT
94	Mark Pike	DE
96	Leon Seals	DE
97	Cornelius Bennett	LB
99	Hal Garner	LB

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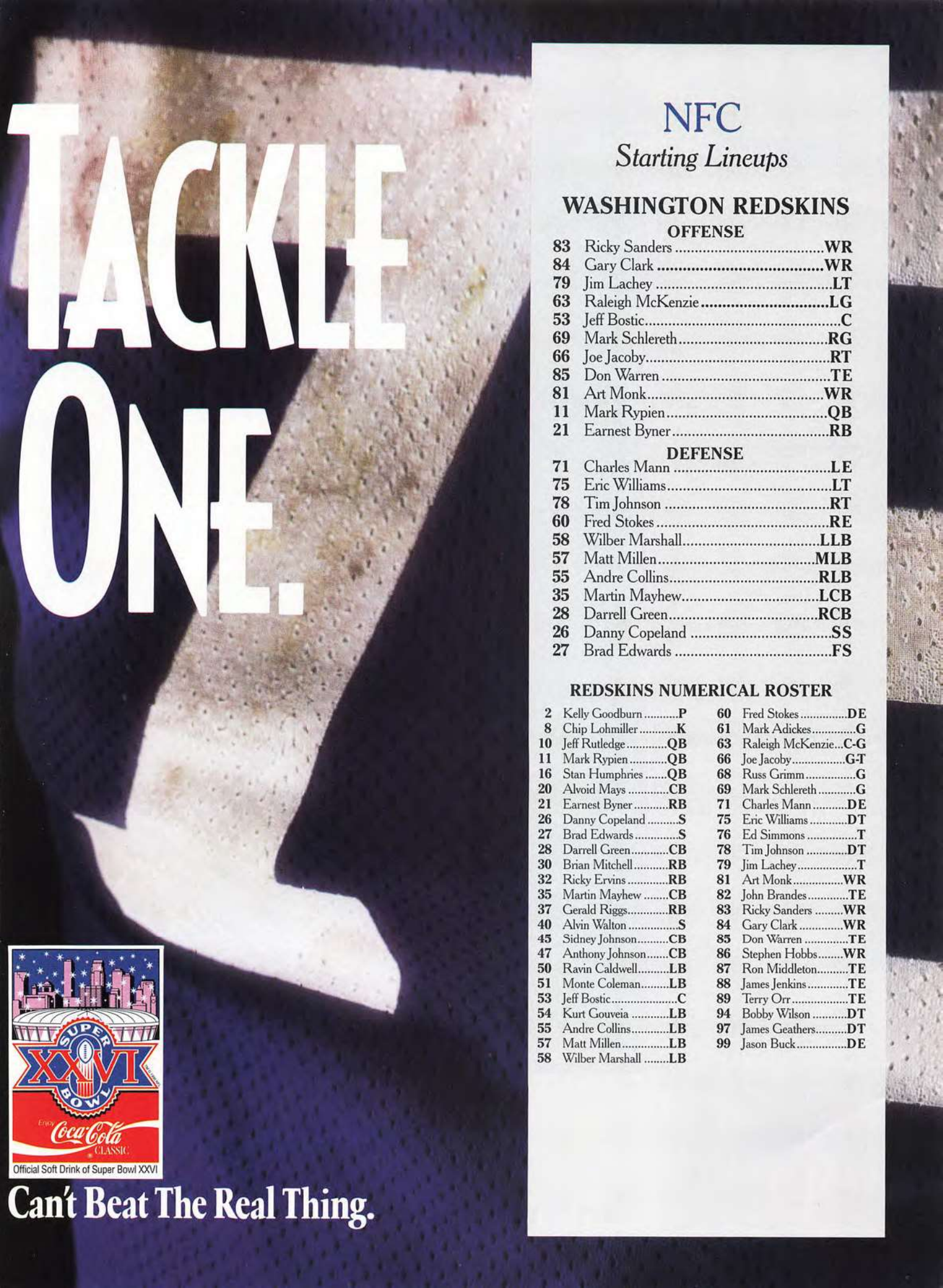

NFC
Starting Lineups

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

OFFENSE

83	Ricky Sanders	WR
84	Gary Clark	WR
79	Jim Lachey	LT
63	Raleigh McKenzie	LG
53	Jeff Bostic	C
69	Mark Schlereth	RG
66	Joe Jacoby	RT
85	Don Warren	TE
81	Art Monk	WR
11	Mark Rypien	QB
21	Earnest Byner	RB

DEFENSE

71	Charles Mann	LE
75	Eric Williams	LT
78	Tim Johnson	RT
60	Fred Stokes	RE
58	Wilber Marshall	LLB
57	Matt Millen	MLB
55	Andre Collins	RLB
35	Martin Mayhew	LCB
28	Darrell Green	RCB
26	Danny Copeland	SS
27	Brad Edwards	FS

REDSKINS NUMERICAL ROSTER

2	Kelly Goodburn	P	60	Fred Stokes	DE
8	Chip Lohmiller	K	61	Mark Adickes	G
10	Jeff Rutledge	QB	63	Raleigh McKenzie	C-G
11	Mark Rypien	QB	66	Joe Jacoby	G-T
16	Stan Humphries	QB	68	Russ Grimm	G
20	Alvoid Mays	CB	69	Mark Schlereth	G
21	Earnest Byner	RB	71	Charles Mann	DE
26	Danny Copeland	S	75	Eric Williams	DT
27	Brad Edwards	S	76	Ed Simmons	T
28	Darrell Green	CB	78	Tim Johnson	DT
30	Brian Mitchell	RB	79	Jim Lachey	T
32	Ricky Ervins	RB	81	Art Monk	WR
35	Martin Mayhew	CB	82	John Brandes	TE
37	Gerald Riggs	RB	83	Ricky Sanders	WR
40	Alvin Walton	S	84	Gary Clark	WR
45	Sidney Johnson	CB	85	Don Warren	TE
47	Anthony Johnson	CB	86	Stephen Hobbs	WR
50	Ravin Caldwell	LB	87	Ron Middleton	TE
51	Monte Coleman	LB	88	James Jenkins	TE
53	Jeff Bostic	C	89	Terry Orr	TE
54	Kurt Gouveia	LB	94	Bobby Wilson	DT
55	Andre Collins	LB	97	James Geathers	DT
57	Matt Millen	LB	99	Jason Buck	DE
58	Wilber Marshall	LB			

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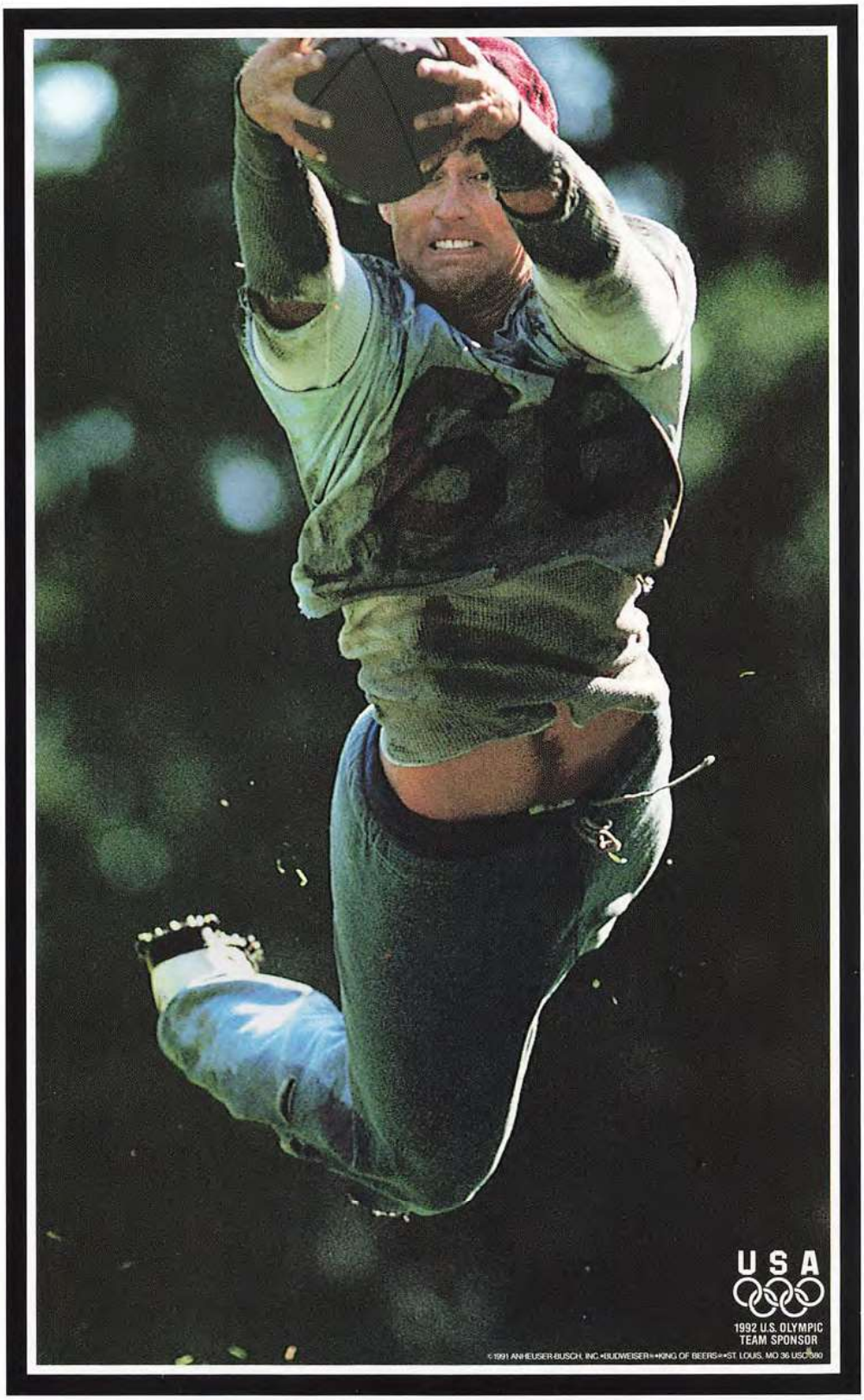

NOTHING BEATS A BUDWEISER®

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Alphabetical Roster

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
61	Adickes, Mark	G	6-4	285	4/22/61	6	Baylor
53	Bostic, Jeff	C	6-2	278	9/18/58	12	Clemson
82	Brandes, John	TE	6-2	249	4/2/64	5	Cameron (Okla.)
99	Buck, Jason	DE	6-4	265	7/27/63	5	BYU
21	Byner, Earnest	RB	5-10	218	9/15/62	8	East Carolina
50	Caldwell, Ravin	LB	6-3	240	8/4/63	5	Arkansas
84	Clark, Gary	WR	5-9	173	5/1/62	7	James Madison
51	Coleman, Monte	LB	6-2	245	11/4/57	13	Central Arkansas
55	Collins, Andre	LB	6-1	233	5/4/68	2	Penn State
26	Copeland, Danny	S	6-2	213	1/24/66	3	Eastern Kentucky
27	Edwards, Brad	S	6-2	207	3/22/66	4	South Carolina
32	Ervins, Ricky	RB	5-7	200	12/7/68	R	USC
97	Geathers, James	DT	6-7	289	6/26/60	7	Wichita State
2	Goodburn, Kelly	P	6-2	199	4/14/62	5	Emporia State
54	Gouveia, Kurt	LB	6-1	228	9/14/64	5	BYU
28	Green, Darrell	CB	5-8	170	2/15/60	9	Texas A&I
68	Grimm, Russ	G	6-3	284	5/2/59	11	Pittsburgh
86	Hobbs, Stephen	WR	5-11	200	11/14/65	2	North Alabama
16	Humphries, Stan	QB	6-2	224	4/14/65	3	Northeastern La.
66	Jacoby, Joe	G-T	6-6	314	7/6/59	11	Louisville
88	Jenkins, James	TE	6-2	234	8/17/67	R	Rutgers
47	Johnson, Anthony	CB	5-8	170	6/22/67	3	Southwest Texas St.
45	Johnson, Sidney	CB	5-9	175	3/7/65	3	California
78	Johnson, Tim	DT	6-3	283	1/29/65	5	Penn State
79	Lachey, Jim	T	6-6	294	6/4/63	7	Ohio State
8	Lohmiller, Chip	K	6-3	210	7/16/66	4	Minnesota
71	Mann, Charles	DE	6-6	272	4/12/61	9	Nevada-Reno
58	Marshall, Wilber	LB	6-1	231	4/18/62	8	Florida
35	Mayhew, Martin	CB	5-8	172	10/8/65	3	Florida State
20	Mays, Alvoid	CB	5-9	180	7/10/66	2	West Virginia
63	McKenzie, Raleigh	C-G	6-2	279	2/8/63	7	Tennessee
87	Middleton, Ron	TE	6-2	270	7/17/65	6	Auburn
57	Millen, Matt	LB	6-2	245	3/12/58	12	Penn State
30	Mitchell, Brian	RB	5-10	209	8/18/68	2	Southwestern La.
81	Monk, Art	WR	6-3	210	12/5/57	12	Syracuse
89	Orr, Terry	TE	6-2	235	9/27/61	7	Texas
37	Riggs, Gerald	RB	6-1	240	11/6/60	10	Arizona State
10	Rutledge, Jeff	QB	6-1	193	1/22/57	13	Alabama
11	Rypien, Mark	QB	6-4	234	10/2/62	5	Washington State
83	Sanders, Ricky	WR	5-11	180	8/30/62	6	Southwest Texas St.
69	Schlereth, Mark	G	6-3	283	1/25/66	3	Idaho
76	Simmons, Ed	T	6-5	300	12/31/63	5	Eastern Washington
60	Stokes, Fred	DE	6-3	274	3/14/64	5	Georgia Southern
40	Walton, Alvin	S	6-0	180	3/14/64	6	Kansas
85	Warren, Don	TE	6-4	242	5/5/56	13	San Diego State
75	Williams, Eric	DT	6-4	290	2/24/62	8	Washington State
94	Wilson, Bobby	DT	6-2	283	3/4/68	R	Michigan State

Depth Chart

OFFENSE				
WR	**—83 Ricky Sanders**	86 Stephen Hobbs		
WR	**—84 Gary Clark**	86 Stephen Hobbs		
LT	**—79 Jim Lachey**	66 Joe Jacoby		
LG	**—63 Raleigh McKenzie**	61 Mark Adickes		
C	**—53 Jeff Bostic**	63 Raleigh McKenzie		
RG	**—69 Mark Schlereth**	68 Russ Grimm		
RT	**—66 Joe Jacoby**	76 Ed Simmons	61 Mark Adickes	
TE	**—85 Don Warren**	87 Ron Middleton	89 Terry Orr	
		88 James Jenkins	82 John Brandes	
WR	**—81 Art Monk**	83 Ricky Sanders		
QB	**—11 Mark Rypien**	10 Jeff Rutledge	16 Stan Humphries	
RB	**—21 Earnest Byner**	32 Ricky Ervins	37 Gerald Riggs	
			30 Brian Mitchell	
DEFENSE				
LE	**—71 Charles Mann**	60 Fred Stokes		
LT	**—75 Eric Williams**	97 James Geathers		
RT	**—78 Tim Johnson**	94 Bobby Wilson		
RE	**—60 Fred Stokes**	99 Jason Buck		
LLB	**—58 Wilber Marshall**	50 Ravin Caldwell		
MLB	**—57 Matt Millen**	54 Kurt Gouveia		
RLB	**—55 Andre Collins**	51 Monte Coleman		
LCB	**—35 Martin Mayhew**	47 Anthony Johnson	20 Alvoid Mays	
RCB	**—28 Darrell Green**	45 Sidney Johnson		
SS	**—26 Danny Copeland**	40 Alvin Walton		
FS	**—27 Brad Edwards**	20 Alvoid Mays		
SPECIALISTS				
P	**— 2 Kelly Goodburn**			
K	**— 8 Chip Lohmiller**			
H	**—10 Jeff Rutledge**	2 Kelly Goodburn		
PC	**—82 John Brandes**	53 Jeff Bostic		
KC	**—82 John Brandes**	53 Jeff Bostic		
PR	**—30 Brian Mitchell**	86 Stephen Hobbs		
KR	**—30 Brian Mitchell**	32 Ricky Ervins	86 Stephen Hobbs	

Bold Face—Starters

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Joe Gibbs
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Charlie Casserly
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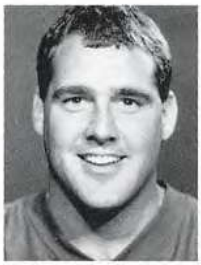
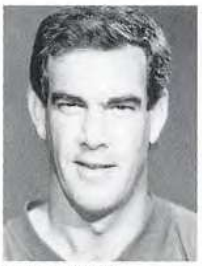
Bobby Mitchell
Asst. General Manager

2 Kelly Goodburn
Punter



8 Chip Lohmiller
Kicker

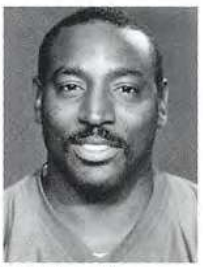


10 Jeff Rutledge
Quarterback

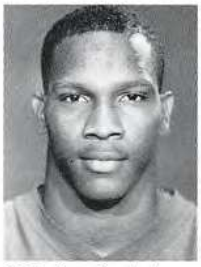
11 Mark Rypien
Quarterback

16 Stan Humphries
Quarterback

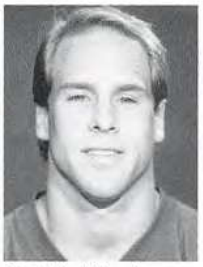
20 Alvoid Mays
Cornerback



21 Earnest Byner
Running Back

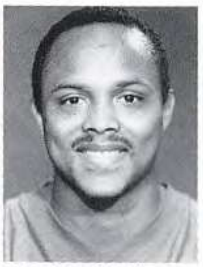


26 Danny Copeland
Safety



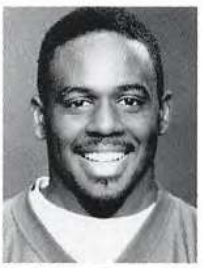
27 Brad Edwards
Safety

28 Darrell Green
Cornerback



30 Brian Mitchell
Running Back

32 Ricky Ervins
Running Back

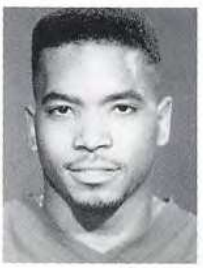


35 Martin Mayhew
Cornerback

37 Gerald Riggs
Running Back

40 Alvin Walton
Safety

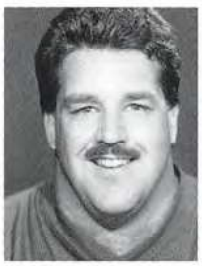
45 Sidney Johnson
Cornerback



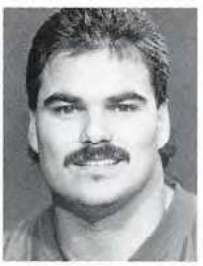
47 Anthony Johnson
Cornerback

50 Ravin Caldwell
Linebacker

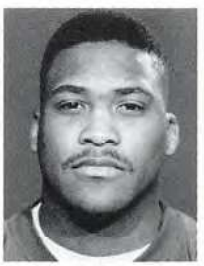
51 Monte Coleman
Linebacker



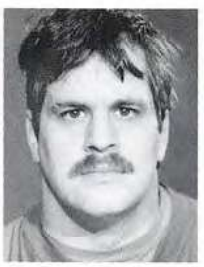
53 Jeff Bostic
Center



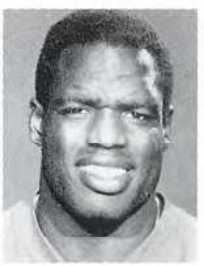
54 Kurt Gouveia
Linebacker



55 Andre Collins
Linebacker



57 Matt Millen
Linebacker

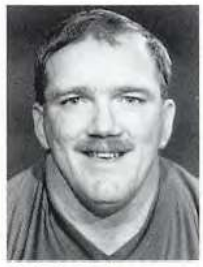


58 Wilber Marshall
Linebacker

60 Fred Stokes
Defensive End

61 Mark Adickes
Guard

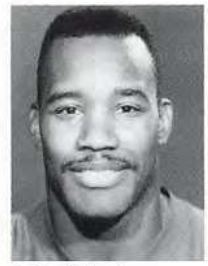
63 Raleigh McKenzie
Center-Guard



66 Joe Jacoby
Guard-Tackle

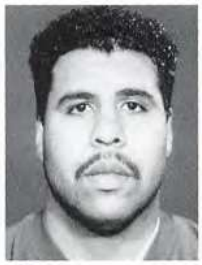
68 Russ Grimm
Guard

69 Mark Schlereth
Guard



71 Charles Mann
Defensive End

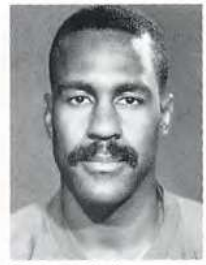
75 Eric Williams
Defensive Tackle



76 Ed Simmons
Tackle

78 Tim Johnson
Defensive Tackle

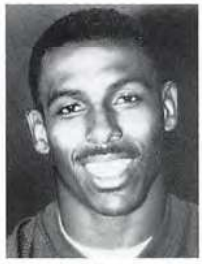
79 Jim Lachey
Tackle



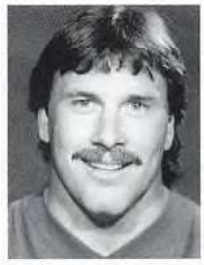
81 Art Monk
Wide Receiver

82 John Brandes
Tight End

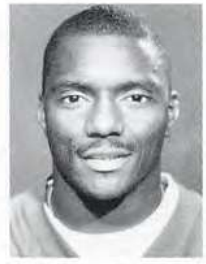
83 Ricky Sanders
Wide Receiver



84 Gary Clark
Wide Receiver

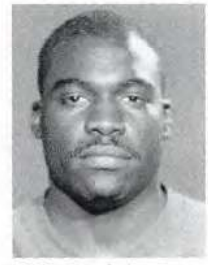


85 Don Warren
Tight End



86 Stephen Hobbs
Wide Receiver

87 Ron Middleton
Tight End



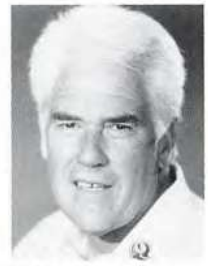
88 James Jenkins
Tight End

89 Terry Orr
Tight End

94 Bobby Wilson
Defensive Tackle

97 James Geathers
Defensive Tackle

99 Jason Buck
Defensive End

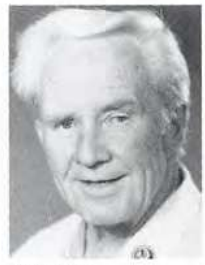


Don Breaux
Assistant Coach

Jack Burns
Assistant Coach

Bobby DePaul
Assistant Coach

Rod Dowhower
Assistant Coach



Jim Hanifan
Assistant Coach

Larry Peccatiello
Assistant Coach

Richie Petitbon
Assistant Coach

Dan Riley
Assistant Coach

Wayne Sevier
Assistant Coach

Warren Simmons
Assistant Coach

Charley Taylor
Assistant Coach

Emmitt Thomas
Assistant Coach

LaVern Torgeson
Assistant Coach

Steve Wetzel
Assistant Coach

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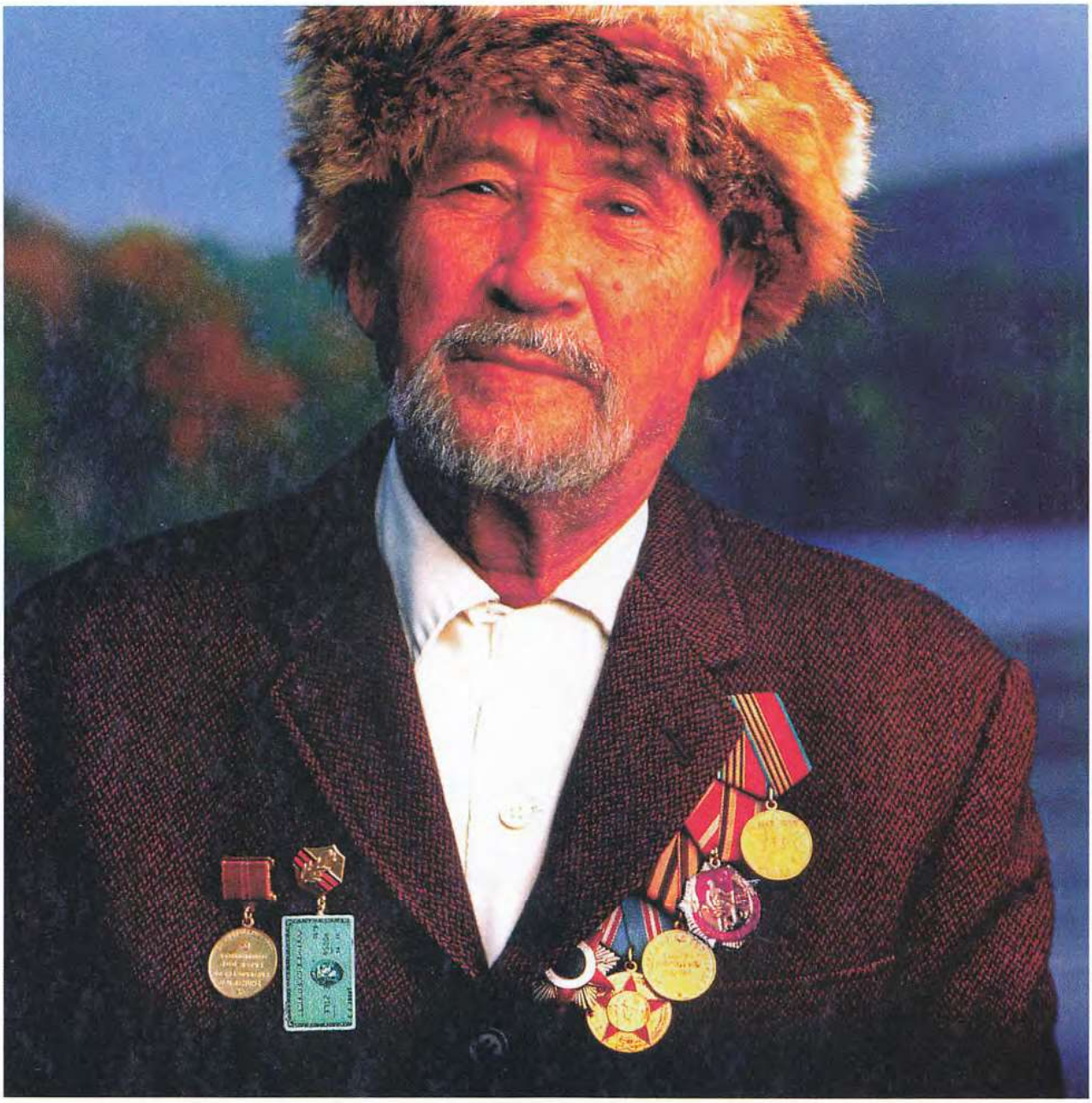

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SUPER XXVI BOWL

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GMC TRUCK

THE STRENGTH OF EXPERIENCE

SPOTLIGHT

Andy Rooney on Football

Pro Football and Minnesota

Eugene McCarthy on Football

Legend of Bronko Nagurski

Minnesota Seasons

August Wilson on Football

Vince Lombardi and the Elements

Memories of Paul Brown

Phil Barber on Football

Images of 1991

SPOTLIGHT

ANDY ROONEY ON FOOTBALL

OH, WHAT A LOVELY GAME

I was an All-America guard at Colgate University in 1940. I went on to play in the NFL, and later was voted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Well, I wasn't *actually* an All-America and I never played professional football—you know how old football players and war veterans tend to exaggerate—but I did get into a few games in college when we were ahead by four or five touchdowns and coach Andy Kerr cleared the bench to give the substitutes a break.

That was as close as I ever got to being either All-America or in the Hall of Fame, but during those years as something less than a Heisman Trophy winner, I acquired a love for football that is undiminished 50 years later. In my view, any other game is tiddlywinks.

As a freshman at Colgate, I was a 185-pound running guard. In the Single-or Double-Wing formation, devised many years before by one of the great early football coaches, Pop Warner, I pulled to run interference for a halfback or fullback on half the plays. We had Bill Geyer, one of the all-time great players in Colgate history, who had run 100 yards in 10 seconds as a sprinter. He was one of the fastest, toughest, most elusive halfbacks in the nation. Later, he played with the Chicago Bears.

There was no intermediary, no handoff, in the Single-Wing offense, as there is in today's game in which the quarterback handles the ball on every play. Everything was Shotgun. When the play was called for Geyer to sweep wide right, the center snapped the ball directly to Bill and he took off.

Everything went well in practice those first few weeks. I got by the first couple of games okay, but then we went up to Archbold Stadium to play Syracuse. They had a big, fast, rangy end who was responsible for everything that went outside.

We ran one of those sweeps during the game. From a sprinter's stance, the Syracuse end started at the same instant Geyer began his outside charge. From my crouched position, I spun to the right and headed for the gap between the end and Geyer.

The distance between the two was shorter than the distance between me and them and with my speed, which unlike Geyer's was closer to 20 seconds for the 100, there was no way I could get between them for a block.

We beat Syracuse that day, as I recall, but Geyer never gave me a lot of credit for the victory.

My career as a football player in college was one stumbling block after another. I was determined not to let the game dominate my life and become a culturally deprived jock, so I decided to take piano lessons during the football season.

One of the saddest days of my life was the day I realized I'd played my last game of football. It was as final as death.

The wife of a history professor undertook, at $2 for each one-hour lesson, to teach me. During my first lesson, I recall thinking that it was quite probable that I had more potential as a football player than I had as a musician. My first day of piano lessons also turned out to be my last. I went directly from that lesson to football practice. It was a game-style scrimmage between substitutes and the first team, with officials.

During the second half of the scrimmage that day, I was playing opposite Bill Chernowkowski, one of those ape-like athletes whose weight was mostly at or above the waist. He had short, relatively small legs and a huge torso with stomach to match. At 260 pounds, "Cherno" was the heaviest man on the squad.

As things turned out, it didn't matter where he carried most of his weight or how much of it there was. When he stepped on the back of my right hand in the middle of the third quarter, that ended, for all time, any thought I might have had of being another Horowitz. My hand still is slightly deformed, and I often look at it with the same sense of pride with which I view the television Emmys in my bookcase.

One of the saddest days of my life was the day I realized I'd played my last game of football. It was as final as death. As a young boy, I'd played in vacant lots—back in the days when there were vacant lots—every Saturday during the fall. By the time I got to high school, I knew I loved the game better than any other.

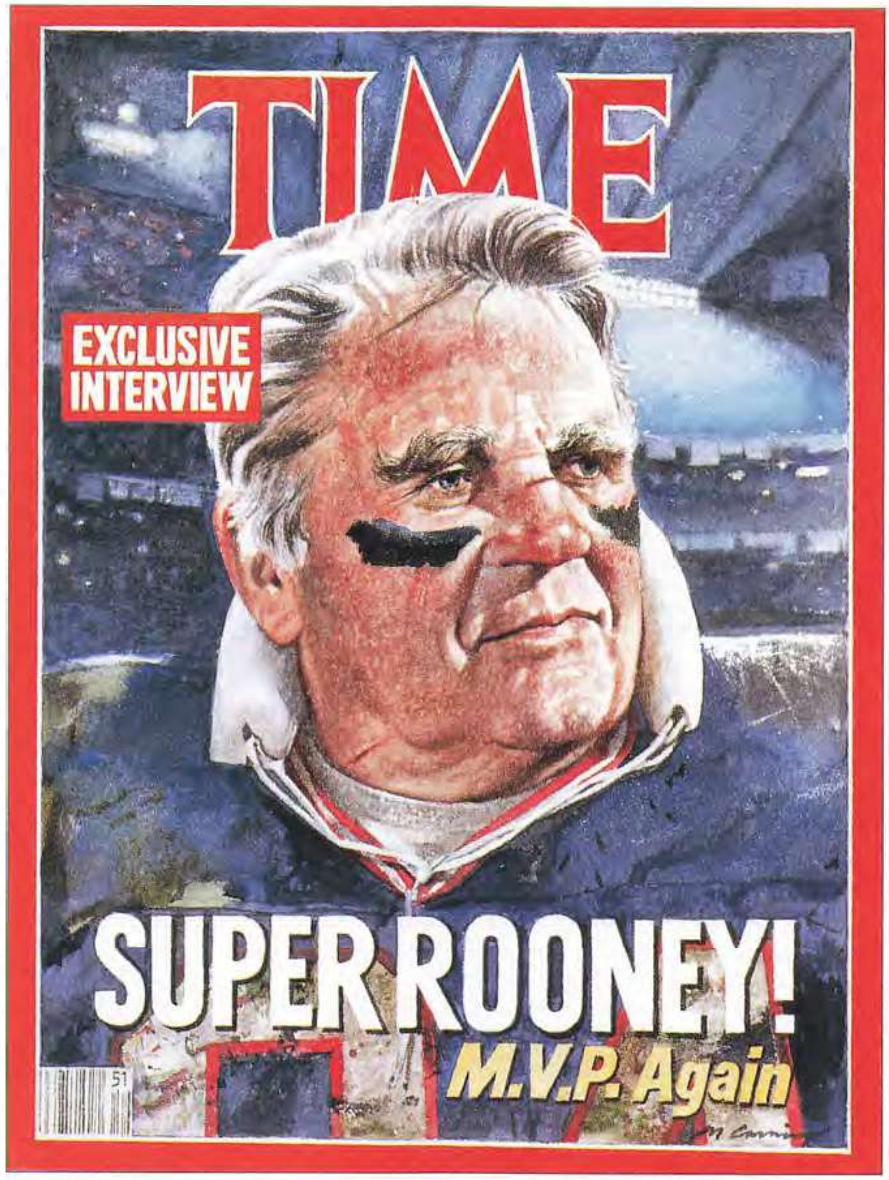
I played all through high school and in college and then, one day, it was over. It was like the day my dog died.

It probably wouldn't occur to anyone who never played that even second stringers love the game. You don't have to be a star to enjoy playing football. You hear parents advise their children to learn to play a safer sport, a sport like golf or tennis that they can enjoy all their lives. I understand that argument but, as bad as I felt on that last day, I

wouldn't trade my football days for golf if I could have started playing when I was 8 and grown up to be Arnold Palmer.

People who have played football at any level watch a game with a different eye than someone who has never played. For one thing, they tend to watch the man playing the position they played. If you played center, you watch the center a lot. If you played end, you watch the ends.

I hear people say they can see the game better at home on television than they can see it sitting in the stadium. No one who knows much football thinks it's as good to watch at home as it is at the stadium. Watching at home is better than not watching football at all, but it isn't the same as being there.



Merv Corning

No one who knows much football thinks it's as good to watch at home as it is at the stadium. Watching at home is better than not watching football at all, but it isn't the same as being there.

The biggest difference in being there is that, good as the pictures, commentary, and replays are on television, the person at home is watching a small part of the total game that someone else has chosen to show him. What you watch is not your choice. At the stadium, the fans can watch what they want to watch anywhere on the field. I concede that if a person is not a knowledgeable football fan, he or she might get more out of watching it on television.

I often miss completely something that has happened to the ball carrier, because I'm watching what the guard is doing to the nose tackle or vice versa.

Every team played a seven-man defensive line when I played, with only one linebacker—always the toughest kid on the block. We all played both ways, of course, offense and defense. If they hadn't changed the rules, Joe Montana might have had to play free safety on defense. I don't know how that would have worked out for Joe, but I think New Orleans fullback Ironhead Heyward could hold his own as a middle linebacker on defense.

The great Frank Gifford, the most graceful football player I ever watched, was one of the last to play both offense and defense for the Giants.

Even relatively new football fans have seen a lot of rule changes. One of my prized possessions is a *Spalding Official Football Guide* that belonged to my uncle, who played for Williams College in 1900.

In those days they had to make only five yards for a first down (in three downs), and the literary style of the old rule book should embarrass the current rules committee.

"The game progresses," the rule book reads, "in a series of downs, the only limitation being a rule designed to prevent one side from continually keeping possession of the ball without any material advance, which would be manifestly unfair to the opponents.

"In three attempts to advance the ball, a side not having made five yards toward the opponent's goal, must surrender possession of the ball.

"It is seldom that a team actually surrenders the ball in this way," the rule book continues in its elegant prose, "because, after two attempts, if the prospects of completing the five-yard gain appear small, it is so clearly politic to kick the ball as far as possible that such a method is more apt to be adopted."

Eat your heart out, John Madden!

In 1925, the NFL player limit was 16. As late as 1944, a team still was limited to a roster of 28 players. And, of course, the uniform has changed.

One of the primary rules of life is that nothing seems to help, and that certainly is true of the protective equipment used by football players. Everything a player wears to a game today is better than the equipment of 35 years ago, but I don't notice that there are any fewer injuries. Of course, modern-day collisions involve bigger, stronger people. Early helmets were felt-padded leather. Today's plastic helmets are part protector, part lethal weapon.

Players used to make some individual choices about their uniforms. What a player wore frequently was not very uniform at all. There were players who liked stockings and players who didn't. In the NFL today, stockings are mandatory. I played next to a center who had an interesting theory. He refused to wear an athletic supporter because he felt he was safer from injury in this sensitive area if his private parts weren't confined like sitting ducks.

There was no rule against grabbing the facemask until 1956, for a simple reason—there were no facemasks. A lot of teeth were lost. I remember Bill Farley coming back to the huddle, leaning over, and spitting his front teeth on the ground as he listened to the signal for the next play. Broken noses were common—but not considered serious. Stanley Steinberg wore a huge rubber protector over his nose that looked like part of a clown's costume. He held it in place by clenching a mouthpiece attached to it between his teeth.

The one rule I would most like to see put into effect—and never will as long as coaches dominate the rules committee—is one that would require a man on the field to call plays. If football is a game of mind and body and there are only 11 men from each team on the field, one of those players should be responsible for making the decision about which play to run. It should be illegal for a coach or anyone on the sidelines or in a booth up in the stadium to send in or signal a play.

If that seems like a rule that would be too difficult to enforce, make it the honor system. It's an honorable game.

Position names have changed over the years. We played with a quarterback, two halfbacks, a fullback, two ends, two guards, two tackles, and a center. In today's Super Bowl, each team will have 45 players available and the position names are different. There won't be anyone called a center on defense. He's a nose tackle now, assuming the team lines up an odd number of defensive linemen. On offense, the big, slower ends are tight ends and the smaller, fast ones are wide receivers. The tight ends block a lot, and, while they also catch (or drop) passes, they aren't called tight receivers.

Originally the quarterback was so called because he didn't stand back as far as the tailback and fullback in the Single-Wing. His position name has remained the same even though he usually no longer stands even a quarter of the way back.

Even the language of the game has evolved. Most of the football words used by fans have been popularized by radio and television commentators. Some assistant coach starts using a word in practice as a code for some action. The word is picked up by players and, eventually, by commentators and newspaper reporters hungry for authentic-sounding color.

Football locker rooms are good places. The talk is good, the feeling is good. Even the smell gets to you if you love the game.

Most of the words stick for a few years and then disappear in the lexicon of long ago. A few seem to have long lives. During the 1960s, the popular word for what a linebacker did when he abandoned his responsibility for a short pass and tried to break through the offensive line to get the quarterback was "red dog." I haven't heard "red dog" in years. Now, what they do is "blitz" and the word seems to be having a longer life than "red dog."

One phrase that's just come into its own this year is "red zone." Until a few years ago, the area inside the 20-yard line was simply that, "the area inside the twenty-yard line." Now it's regularly being referred to as "the red zone."

"Run-and-Shoot" and the "hurry-up offense" are big these days, just the way the "flea flicker" pass and "the Statue of Liberty" used to be, but you can bet those phrases will be put out of their misery just the way "red dog" was. It's the kind thing to do to an old dog.

In spite of my failure to be chosen as an All-America during my playing days, I have great memories of it. Football locker rooms are good places. The talk is good, the feeling is good. Even the smell gets to you if you love the game.

When I go to the stadium, I bring either a small black-and-white television set or a radio. I don't watch the television set but sometimes, depending on who's doing the broadcasting, I prefer it to listening to the radio. Other times I stick with radio exclusively. All of the announcers broaden my knowledge of the game I'm watching by pointing out things I didn't see. Of course, I often feel like pointing out to them things I saw that they didn't. "Hey, Pat!" I yell to Summerall in my mind. "You missed the block Elliott put on so and so."

In addition to the radio and television sets with earplugs, I bring a small pair of good binoculars, a tuna fish sandwich on rye, and a thermos of chicken soup when it's cold. I am indifferent to the weather. I come prepared, and, except for a few early games when it can be too hot, I don't care what the temperature is.

When Sunday dawns cold, gray, and rainy, I invariably am asked whether I'm going to the game anyway. For 45 years I've had the same answer to that question. "Why *wouldn't* I go?"

Rain or snow are of no concern to me at a game. I actually enjoy sitting there, properly dressed and shielded, in a cold rain. The only minor problem I have with rain is that water tends to run up my sleeves when I hold the binoculars to my eyes for long periods.

Having sat with 70,000-odd strangers every Sunday for all these years, I think I understand fans better than the players do. Players seem to take fans more seriously than fans take themselves.

While it has become popular to suggest that anyone who spends time watching someone else play a game is an idiot, I happily profess to being one of those idiots. The Super Bowl is one of the highlights of my year.

If anyone here at the game is one of a small but inevitable number of people who come to every Super Bowl game, not because he or she wishes to but because a husband or friend had an extra ticket, you may wonder why some of us derive so much pleasure from a mere game. I ask you to look for a minute at the headlines in your newspaper any day of the week.

"RAGING FIRE KILLS 16!"

"AIRLINER DOWN IN MOUNTAINOUS AREA. ALL 237 ABOARD BELIEVED LOST."

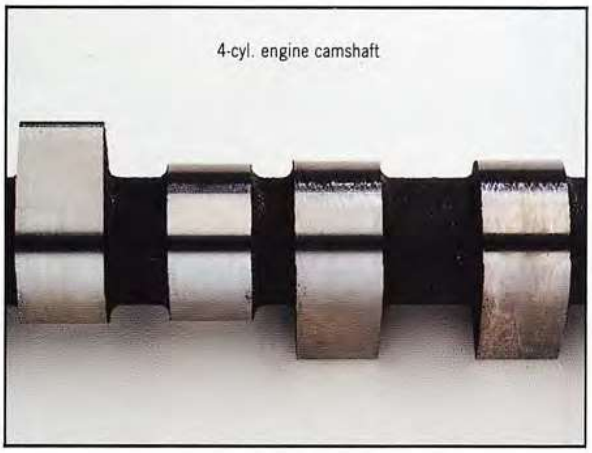
"BANKRUPTCIES RISE AS ECONOMY FAILS TO RESPOND."

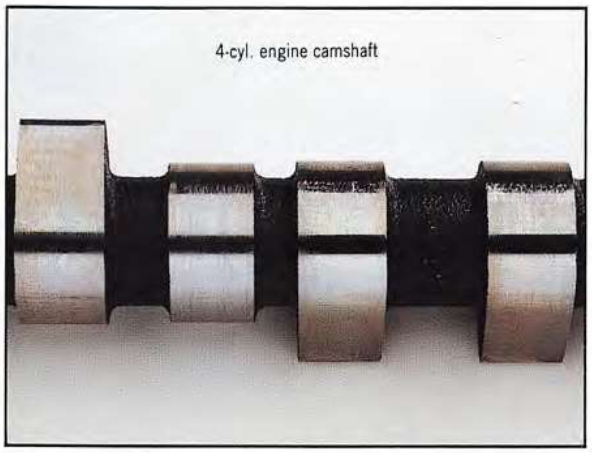
"PARENTS ARRESTED FOR CHILD ABUSE FOR THIRD TIME."

"AIDS EPIDEMIC ON INCREASE."

Do these tragic events make your day? Does the recent local murder make you happy all over for the rest of the week? Is reading about a raging flood or of corruption in government your idea of a good time?

It's for relief from such depressing world events and from the daily pressure of living our own lives that we turn to sports for entertainment. For many of us, there is nothing in all of sports quite as diverting as football...and no sporting event as much fun to watch as the Super Bowl. ■





Which is which?

Even though both engine parts look brand new, one of them isn't.
While the camshaft on the left actually is brand new, the one on the right has 200,000 miles on it and turned over 250 million times.
How can that be?
Well, in a test we drove an engine 200,000 grueling miles,* at speeds up to 85 miles per hour, stopping only to change the oil and to perform routine maintenance.
Then we ripped the engine apart.
And what did we find?
Nothing. Absolutely nothing.
There was virtually no engine wear. What kept these vital engine parts running like new?
New Advanced Formula Mobil 1®
Synthetic Motor Oil.

New Mobil 1

It keeps your engine running like new.*

*Regular oil/filter changes and scheduled maintenance. © 1992 Mobil Oil Corporation

SPOTLIGHT

FOOTBALL IN A COLD CLIMATE

From Sheepy to Dutch to Bud, the Pro Game Has Been Anything but Dull in Minnesota

BY JIM KLOBUCHAR

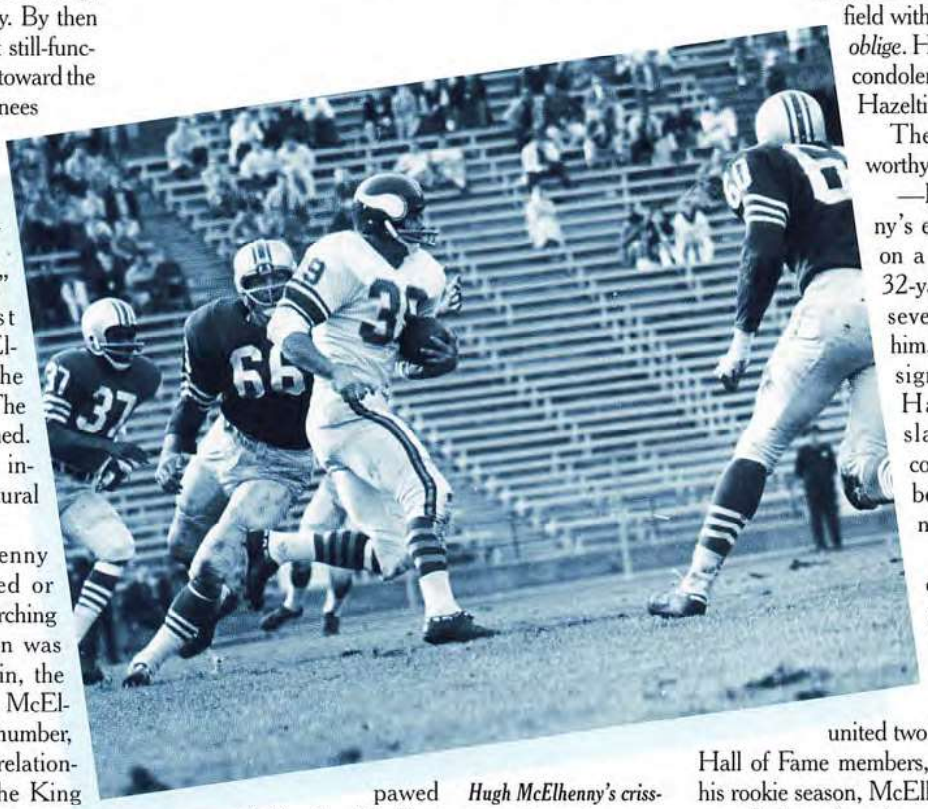
The King of the Halfbacks had one more stride to make, but not an ordinary one. Nothing he did on a football field was ordinary.

Hugh McElhenny. By then he was an elderly, but still-functional virtuoso, gliding toward the end zone, hips and knees moving in concert. His eyes shifted from the goal line to a familiar hulk trying to intervene.

"Oh, no, not again." The words almost formed behind McElhenny's face bar. The King throttled back. The Minnesota crowd aahed. Clearly this was the instinctive act of a natural broken-field wizard.

Baloney. McElhenny was either exhausted or amazed. The man lurching into his lateral vision was Matt Hazeltine, again, the third time in 32 yards. McElhenny duly noted his number, then their fiduciary relationship. At the time, the King played for the Minnesota Vikings. Hazeltine, his insurance agent, was his old confederate on the San Francisco 49ers.

The King twitched his shoulders and changed his heading minutely. Hazeltine pawed fruitlessly as his client swished by. The King always had a sense of place and a grasp of the fitness of the occasion. He also had a duty to his public. He stepped around his flailing insurance man and into the end zone with just a trace of a strut. It was nothing flamboyant. The King did everything on a football field with grace and *noblesse oblige*. He also expressed his condolences to the prostrate Hazeltine.



Hugh McElhenny's criss-cross, zig-zagging runs often left a trail of defenders in his wake. The King was the first of the "modern" stars in Minnesota football history.

Frank Rippon

The incident is noteworthy for three reasons:

—For all of McElhenny's extraordinary deeds on a football field, this 32-yard run, on which seven players missed him, may have been his signature. Counting Hazeltine's triple slam, you actually could raise the number of defenders to nine.

—The play was called and the handoff made by Fran Tarkenton. It was a vignette in a brief partnership that united two future Pro Football Hall of Fame members, Tarkenton then in his rookie season, McElhenny in his tenth.

—It introduced modern professional football to Minnesota.

Romanticists will object to that. They were playing pro or semipro football in Minnesota before the Titanic sank, the wardens of antiquity insist. Nobody wins arguments

NFL Photos

with romanticists. Their legends are as robust as the Titanic's and more durable. So raise the white flag here. Before you get to Van Brocklin, Tarkenton, McElhenny, Alan Page, Bud Grant, Chuck Foreman, and Anthony Carter, and the inescapable Mike Lynn, you have to go through Sheepy Redeen.

Sheepy never starred in a commercial. When they did high-fives in Sheepy's years of stardom, it meant tossing nickels to see which nickel would cover lunch. Sheepy and his accomplices played for a team called the Minneapolis Marines, which began life in a league with the Beavers, Banholzers, Liberties, and Laurels. You won't find them in Canton. Their feats rarely are celebrated today because they played semipro, community ball and the football itself had the general contours of an overweight cantaloupe. People dropkicked a lot. Their zeal in avoiding the forward pass later inspired Woody Hayes. There were no player agents. There weren't even a whole lot of helmets.

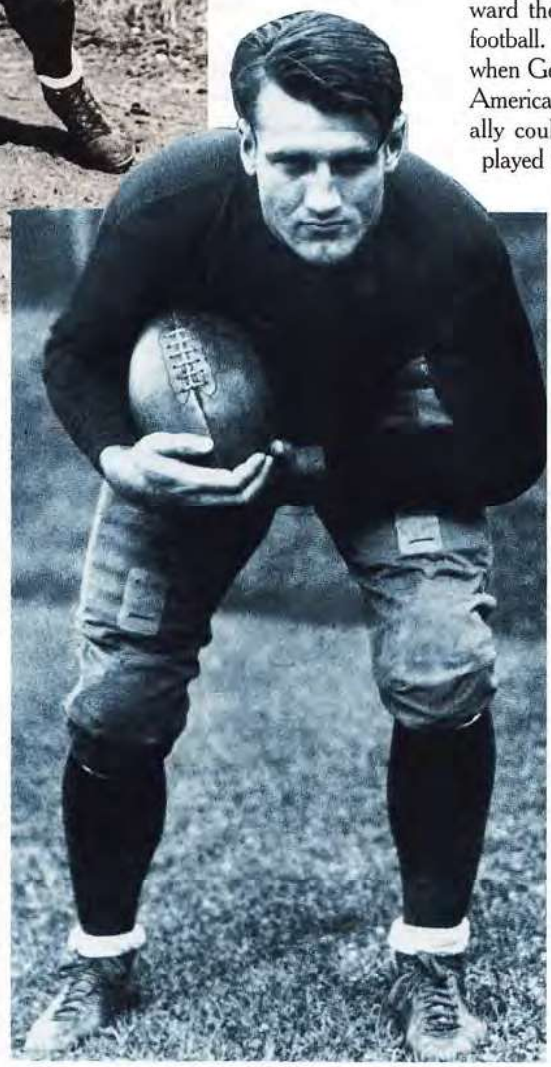
Pro Football Hall of Fame

Johnny Blood (McNally, left) earned $75 a game playing for owner Ole Haugsrud's (center) Duluth Eskimos. At $28,000, an appreciative Ernie Nevers (right) came considerably more expensive.

Pro Football Hall of Fame

Bronko Nagurski (right) and the Golden Gophers of college ball dominated the football scene in Minnesota for more than 30 years. Nagusrki went on to Pro Football Hall of Fame status, albeit with Chicago.

The tackle couldn't run much, either, but at least he was upright. And he didn't have to change his number from 75 to 25. In those years, there weren't any numbers.



Pro Football Hall of Fame

But the Marines stubbornly advanced toward the beachheads of recognizable pro football. They reached it in 1921 at a time when George Halas was trying to convince America that commercialized brawling actually could be entertaining. The Marines played in the APFA and the NFL from 1921-24 before suspending operations. The Minneapolis Red Jackets, a second Minnesota semipro team that employed mostly former University of Minnesota heroes, graced the NFL standings in 1929 and 1930. Sheepy played end at 5 feet 8 inches. They called him Sheepy because he had white hair, but he also had rough and aggressive urges, and he might have become passably immortal in Minnesota if not for the Eskimos.

The Eskimos weren't the state's first settlers. They were a football team organized by a gentle, elfin tobacco dealer and jackpine promoter named Ole Haugsrud, who earlier had created what may have been the only pro football team named after a hardware store.

Ole claimed in later years that he won an NFL title in 1924 with the Eskimos' forerunners, a team entitled the Duluth Kelleys. Kelley was the hardware store. Ole claimed that his saw-and-hammer team won the title in 1924.

If you got hurt, leaving the field was not a serious option unless you were comatose. In that case, reasonable time was allowed either for revival or notifying next of kin. If you still could stand, kneel, or squat, a position usually was available for you. There was nothing much on the bench except jugs of water, which were used both for drinking and defensive weapons when the disagreements came to blows. Players were interchangeable. It was the crude beginning of situation football. If you were a halfback with a charley horse, you changed places with the tackle.

FOOTBALL IN A COLD CLIMATE

Fred Anderson

Max Winter owned part of Minneapolis-St. Paul's charter franchise of the AFL. But on the invitation of George Halas, Minnesota was granted an NFL franchise and Winter was named team president.

Joe Carr, the NFL president then, said Cleveland won the title, a disagreement that doesn't mean a whole lot to anybody except Ole's heirs.

Ole later organized the Duluth Eskimos, a team that should have been kept by the NFL simply for the zany charm of its name. Ole wangled an NFL franchise and signed Ernie Nevers for a then-boxcar salary of $28,000.

The supporting studs had to grub for $75 a game. Among them was one Johnny Blood (McNally), an unquenchable rogue-warrior-poet who was destined for the Hall of Fame himself. Johnny Blood not only ran and kicked for the Eskimos, he wrote melodramatic promotional copy for the pregame ads. Johnny Words on the typewriter became Johnny Touchdown on Sundays. Blood was the ballplayer who quoted Shakespeare, sometimes, when he was sober. He also hung by his fingernails from an eighth-floor hotel window ledge to escape detection by one of the coaching beagles checking on curfew violators.

On the other hand, Ernie Nevers was more orderly, if more expensive. He had been an All-America college player at Stanford and he was a native of Superior, Wisconsin, which is across Lake Superior from Duluth. Transportation to Duluth from the rest of the NFL in those years was dicey. So the Eskimos played almost all of their games on the road the next two years.

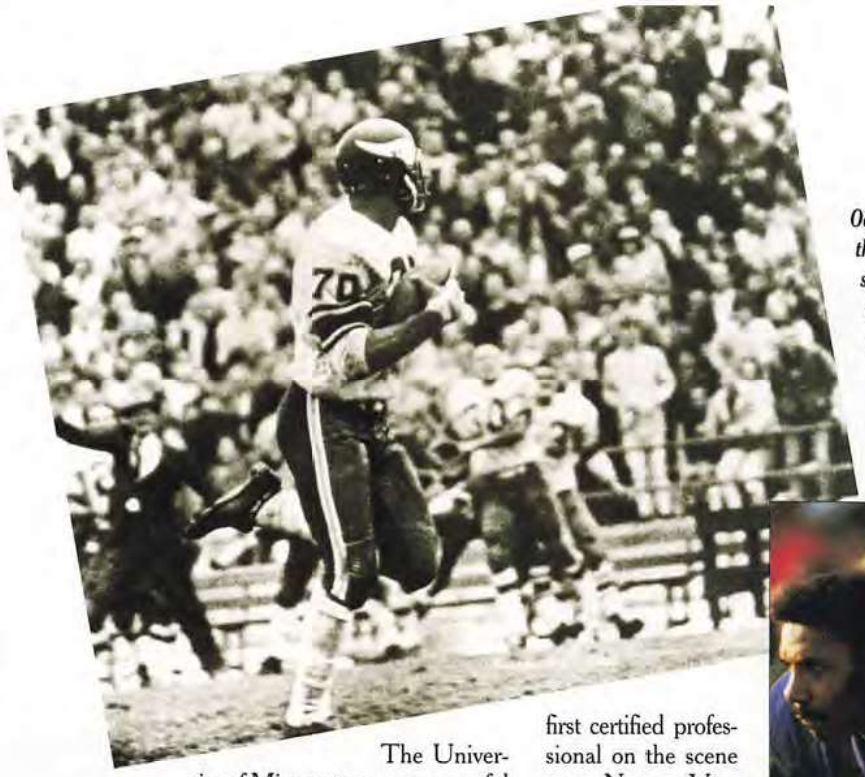
Ole denied they traveled by dog sled. He also said they ate chicken, not raw seal. But Nevers went back to Stanford to assist Pop Warner in 1928 and Ole put the NFL's icebox franchise into deep freeze for a year, then sold it to Orange, New Jersey, for $3,000. From then until 1961, football in Minnesota was Bronko Nagurski, Bernie Bierman, Pug Lund, Bruce Smith, Billy Bye, Paul Giel, and the Golden Gophers of college ball.

Fran Tarkenton (10), the Vikings' first quarterback, and Norm Van Brocklin, the first head coach, each was destined for the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Things weren't always so jocular for Van Brocklin's teams, but the Vikings celebrated after stunning the Bears in the first game in franchise history.

David Boss

NFL Photos



Ooops! Ignoring pleas from the sidelines, Jim Marshall scooped up a San Francisco fumble in a game in 1964 and dashed 66 yards into football lore. His wrong-way run scored a safety for the 49ers, but the Vikings won, anyway.

NFL Photos

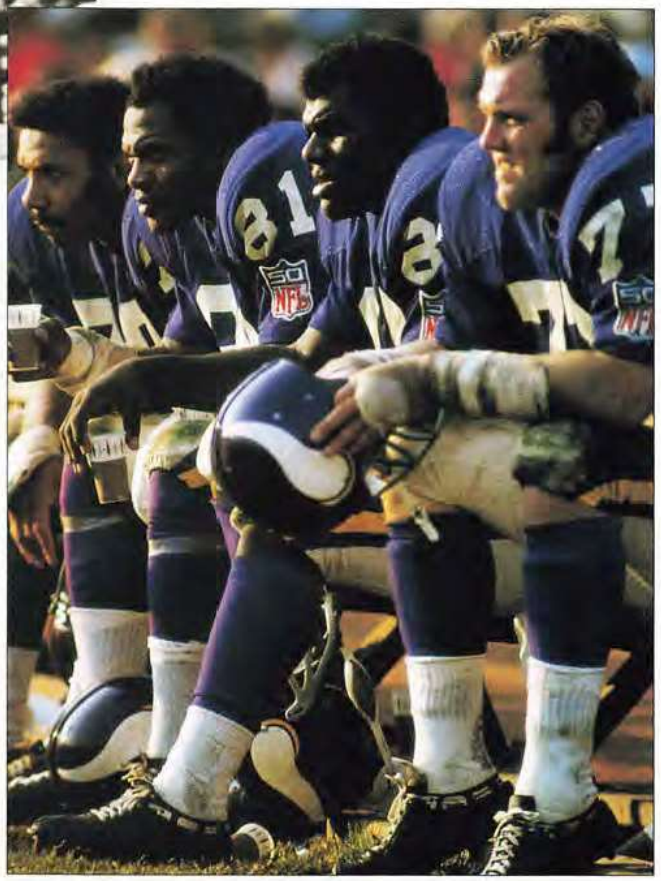
The University of Minnesota was so powerful in the intercollegiate football trench wars of the 1930s and 1940s, and so popular with the natives, that the arrival of the NFL in Minnesota in 1961 just barely edged the ice fishing contests for public attention.

The AFL actually got there first, the American Football League of Joe Foss, Lamar Hunt, the Chargers' Barron Hilton and Frank Leahy (that's right), the Titans' Harry Wismer (that's correct, although not necessarily right). People called it the AF of L. Remember? Later it was Joe Namath, Al Davis, George Blanda, and folks of that ilk. The AF of L held its organizational meeting in Chicago in 1959 as the future rival of the NFL. Minneapolis-St. Paul was a charter member. The new franchise was represented by the same people—Max Winter and Bill Boyer—who not long afterward deserted the mavericks and joined the NFL on the invitation of George Halas.

Halas maneuvered the conspiracy. Some credited the old baron with humanitarian motives, but claims to altruism never were quite convincing. Halas said he wanted to award his old chum Ole Haugsrud with an NFL franchise. That part is authentic. Ole had to be part of it, because as a former NFL owner he held the right of first refusal on any new franchise in Minnesota. His investment was modest. Winter, Boyer, H.P. Skoglund, and St. Paul publisher Bernie Ridder ran the franchise.

George Halas did have a heart. But it usually yielded to his more passionate interest in cash flow. An AFL team in another Midwest market close to Chicago would have damaged the Bears. So Minnesota joined the NFL in 1961, a year later than Dallas. The first certified professional on the scene was Norm Van Brocklin.

The Van Brocklin-Vikings relationship lasted six years. The players called it an eternity. The coach called it a penance. Still, it produced some quality football and some amazing people and events. Jim Marshall's historic journey in the wrong direction was one. Tarkenton's audacious quarterbacking was another. Hugh McElhenny's magnificent run against the 49ers was another, a gleaming jewel in the chaotic sandbox of a professional football team's first season.



They don't make nicknames like they used to. Ends Carl Eller and Jim Marshall, and tackles Alan Page and Gary Larsen were the Purple People Eaters.

The Dutchman, Van Brocklin, arrived disclaiming any plans to be the messiah of the ice fields. It was an announcement richly vindicated by a casual glance at his first-year roster, which he promptly described as "the thirty-six stiffs." Van Brocklin usually talked with more accuracy and clarity.

As a coach, he was ferocious, giggly, bright, vengeful, resourceful, and unbearable. He also was generous, but rarely on the field. When his mood was foul, which was more or less a condition of life for his teams, his eyes crackled with red lasers of contempt and fury. His lips delivered some of the more original slanders in athletic history.

"Mercer," he screamed at his unfortunate placekicker, Mike Mercer, "you couldn't kick a hooker off a hot water bottle."

This terse judgment defined Van Brocklin's basic sense of democracy. In a few crisp words he defamed both the kicker and the hooker.

Van Brocklin became the Vikings' first coach after retiring as the NFL's number-one quarterback, having directed the Philadelphia Eagles to the 1960 NFL Championship. When he got to Minnesota he announced plans to conduct a concentration camp at the Vikings' first training site.

He didn't call it that. He simply said he was going to hold a camp for-men-only, which, in the pro football lingo of the time, was code for concentration camp. Actually, it wasn't for men only. The Vikings picked a locale in the spruce groves at Bemidji, Minnesota, 250 miles north of Minneapolis-St. Paul. It was cut off from the main trade routes, posing a problem for warriors deprived of love

James Flores

and tenderness. By the third week, midnight desertions from the Vikings' dorms were epidemic. Van Brocklin's coaching assistants were sympathetic, forcing Van Brocklin himself to conduct Saturday night solo patrols of the more remote Bemidji parking lots. There he would ambush an amorous linebacker or tight end, and, like Captain Bligh ordering a keel-hauling, he would decree appropriate punishment the next day: The delinquents would roll down the field end-over-end for 30 minutes under the hot sun.

A Minneapolis sports editor at the time, Charley Johnson, berated the Vikings for choosing a site so far from the centers of publicity.

Hearing this, Van Brocklin snarled. "These stiffs don't need visibility," he said. "What they need is cover and concealment. They're already dressed for the part. They're camouflaged as football players."

It may have been the beginning of the brown-paper-bag syndrome. Van Brocklin's training camps were interminable, brutal, and epic. They were detailed so nostalgically in the book *True Hearts and Purple Heads* that the book still is widely sought by old-guard Vikings fans although it has been out of print for 20 years. On the scale of human suffering, players who survived Van Brocklin's camp compared it with the defeated German Sixth Army's forced march from Stalingrad to Siberia. Van Brocklin's training camps separated the pale-hearted mediocrities, who clearly had no chance, from the hog-headed mediocrities, the ones who were tough, ambitious, or plain lucky. Some of those survived. A few escaped. One later entered a monastery.

Van Brocklin's first Vikings were closer to a football reform school than a recognizable team. You could disregard a McElhenny, Tarkenton, Tommy Mason, Grady Alderman, or Rip Hawkins. They were aberrations. Most of the others were football exiles, roustabouts, or overaged vagabonds. A few of them actually had been shot at during their wanderings. Bill Lapham, the center, was an exception. Bill had been hit in the head with a .22 bullet earlier in life, but it was an accident during hunting season. Friends told him he could have avoided it if he had worn a helmet.

It was good advice for anybody who got near Van Brocklin's training camps. Even the reporters wore helmets. The action always was boisterous but never easy to characterize. Some days it resembled an Alcatraz mutiny. Some days it was closer to the OK Corral. Vendettas were everywhere. Bill Bishop, a lineman earlier described as the only Chicago Bear more bilious than George Halas, threatened to throw Van Brocklin off a team flight. Van Brocklin momentarily considered the implications of this threat. He then jammed a dinner tray into Bishop's face. Van Brocklin once was offended by a question from a Texas newspaperman outside a supper club and swung at him. The punch missed the weaving journalist but landed squarely on a pillar. Van Brocklin later called a news conference to make his defense. It came down to a claim that he was the victim of an unprovoked attack by a post.

Ed Culpepper, a globular tackle from the South and therefore fond of peanuts, walked into a tavern and was offered some shelled saltines. They were contained in one of those giant brandy snifters with a half-quart capacity. Culpepper took the vat and chugged the peanuts. The bartender nearly fainted.

Palmer Pyle was an often competent lineman but much more celebrated as the then-

John Biever

Tarkenton's second tour of duty with the Vikings united him with head coach Bud Grant. Together, they helped lead Minnesota to three NFC championships in four years from 1973-76.

The stoic Grant was a stark contrast to his predecessor, Van Brocklin. Grant seemed unaffected by his surroundings, even the bitter cold and snow of Minnesota's Metropolitan Stadium.

Tony Tomsic

husband of the daughter of Tough Tony Accardo, one of the successors to Al Capone in Chicago. Invited to attend a postgame party with her husband, Mrs. Pyle dressed in her favorite gown. She looked glorious—for three solitary hours, waiting for her husband to come home. He was delayed by a preliminary party with the boys. Pyle wobbled to his apartment to fetch his wife for the main event. Exhausted by his exertions, he walked through the kitchen on his way to the bedroom. "Put on some pizza, hon," he said, "I'm tired and I'm going to bed." He did. He stripped and flopped on the bedspread. Awaking 15 minutes later he yelled, "What happened to the pizza, hon, I'm starved."

The pizza arrived 30 seconds later. It came out of the oven, large, round, and smoking. It was carried into the bedroom by the coldly vengeful daughter of Tough Tony Accardo. "Here's your pizza," she said. Steaming cheese, pepperoni, anchovies, and green peppers cascaded onto Palmer Pyle's bare chest.

He went on injured reserve for two weeks. And yet...

In raw gratitude to Halas for bringing the Vikings into professional football, Van Brocklin loosed his squabbling menagerie on the Chicago Bears in the Vikings' first game as a franchise in 1961. Tarkenton threw 4 touchdown passes and the Vikings won 37-13. When it was over, Halas denounced his feckless athletes in a speech that a listener said was the only one he ever heard that ran 20 minutes without being graced by one printable word. Tarkenton's performance and style that day introduced a new concept into the structure of pro football's offense: the scrambling quarterback.

Tarkenton was a brainy, confident, and resourceful kid from Georgia. The offensive line behind which he worked in his first few years with the Vikings may have been the only one in the NFL nominated for special protection by the Humane Society. But rather than take a sack in the brass-guts tradition of stoic NFL quarterbacks, Tarkenton tried to salvage the play by scurrying across acres of uncharted country behind the line of scrimmage. Van Brocklin, the archetype of the pocket quarterback, understood it but never was thrilled by it. "Tarkenton," he railed, "Third-and-twenty-two is a lousy time to be creative."

While Van Brocklin's teams lost often, they played furiously most of the time. When they didn't, the Dutchman ordered a two-hour scrimmage in pads two days later. Football under the Dutchman was sometimes fun and suspenseful, but more accurately an end-to-end trauma. Vince Lombardi hated to play the Vikings. He didn't literally accuse them of playing dirty football. "They play," he said, "recklessly." It was as close as Vince could come to diplomacy.

By 1964, Van Brocklin's team had finished 8-5-1 in the NFL's old Western Division and seemed ready to challenge Green Bay and Baltimore. One of those victories was blessed by the epic 66-yard-run into the wrong end zone by Jim Marshall after a fumble recovery. He cried when the realization struck him, but he was large enough to join the ensuing roasts, and the act oddly reinforced the team's mounting camaraderie. Yet, a year later the Vikings lost dismally to Baltimore in a watershed game and Van Brocklin quit in exasperation in midseason.

Jim Finks, the general manager, talked him back later that day. But after that the Van Brocklin ferocity, which had driven his teams to levels beyond their limited competence, became an object of locker-room parody. After a futile 1966 season, he resigned again. Part of the disintegration of the Van Brocklin Age with the Vikings grew out of the mutual distaste between the Dutchman and Tarkenton. Van Brocklin thought Tarkenton was selfish and unreliable with his ad-lib style. Tarkenton saw Van Brocklin as unstable, loutish in his coaching behavior, and jealous of the attention given some of his best players.

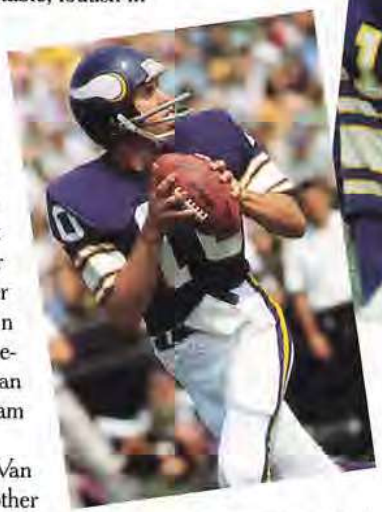
Not long after Van Brocklin left, Tarkenton maneuvered himself a trade to the New York Giants in exchange for draft choices that later thrust the Vikings under Bud Grant into a power center of the NFL. Van Brocklin coached Atlanta for six years before being brought down by an old demon: the refusal of his team to accept his furies.

Although Tarkenton and Van Brocklin lived close to each other in Georgia in the Dutchman's years with the Falcons, they never talked after their split. Both went to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Tarkenton, of course, would experience another incarnation as the Vikings' quarterback. By then they were Bud Grant's Purple People Eaters, one of the best teams in pro football. While it might have been inevitable that Tarkenton would be united with them, Tarkenton didn't believe in inevitability. He made it happen.

Grant had coached for 10 years in Winnipeg. He was the Vikings owners' original choice for the coaching job in 1961, but Grant had reasoned that the coach of a new NFL franchise probably was going to be an ex-coach in a hurry.

By the time Van Brocklin left, the Vikings had people such as Carl Eller, Jim Marshall, Mick Tingelhoff, Lonnie Warwick, Roy Winston, Bill Brown, and Dave Osborn maturing, and Alan Page and Gene Washington about to join the team. Grant thought it might be a judicious time. It was, although his first season, marking the introduction of Joe Kapp to his unready audience in Minnesota, was football vaudeville. The team lost dull, lost comically, and lost often. Kapp threw passes that sometimes were mistaken for lovesick loons by nature-smitten Minnesota fans. But Kapp had a lumberjack's fondness for a football brawl and for the next two years he was the roughhousing soul of the team.

Bud Grant following Van Brocklin as the coach exposed his subjects to the same kind of culture shock as Calvin Coolidge replacing Caligula. Grant was as controlled and undemonstrative as the faces of Rushmore, which he sometimes resembled, standing in the snowstorms at old Metropolitan Stadi-



John Biever

Tony Tomsic

By 1967, the resourceful and elusive Tarkenton (left) was gone, to return five years later. He gave way to Joe Kapp (above), a reckless swashbuckler who became the roughhousing soul of the team.

um, headset clamped over his cap, ears inside his mackinaw. Grant insisted on Stability, on Disciplined Performance, and on Durability. He made his teams stand in formation for the National Anthem and he tolerated no spiking of footballs and no tie-less shirts in hotels. Some of the rules now seem hilarious. But they helped create a tone of professionalism in the Vikings' clubhouse and on the field.

It might be argued that the professionalism was more properly creditable to people such as Page, Eller, Marshall, Tingelhoff, Brown, Washington, Paul Krause, Bobby Bryant, Ron Yary, Ed White, Jeff Siemon, and Chuck Foreman.

Tarkenton was restored to that group after he and Finks arranged for his liberation from the Giants. So, by 1972, Tarkenton was serving his second term as Vikings quarterback. Within 24 hours of his midwinter return in a trade, he was on TV selling bank accounts and snowmobiles. This caused some puzzlement in the observant mind of Alan Page.

John Biever

Darryl Norenberg

Chuck Foreman (above) did much to usher in the era of dual-purpose running backs. When he wasn't on the receiving end of Fran Tarkenton's passes, Ahmad Rashad (left, formerly Bobby Moore) often was.

Page was another future Hall of Famer who had experienced no stampede of TV sponsors despite his unprecedented winning of the league's most-valuable-player trophy as a lineman in 1971. More than any other lineman of his time, he was capable of controlling a football game by himself. It was good to have Tarkenton back, he said. But a team that already had played in one Super Bowl, a team that had won more games than anybody in football the previous three years, evidently knew what to do on a football field.

Such a team, Alan Page said, needed no savior.

Probably not. From 1969 through the 1970s, this team won most of the time. It started the decade with an annihilating pass rush in which Marshall, Page, Eller, and Gary Larsen agreed to "meet at the quarterback" and often did. By the middle 1970s, it had developed one of the most diversified offenses in the NFL, Tarkenton distributing the football to Foreman, Sammie White, Ahmad Rashad, and others, and Foreman doing most of the running.

They won almost incessantly. But they never won the Super Bowl.

The folks in Minnesota agonized about that. Here was a football team that seemed to have mastered all of the crafts and sciences of winning. For all of the individualism in the clubhouse—Tarkenton's, Page's, Eller's, all the others'—Grant had created a team-focused harmony. He did it by making sensible decisions, whether on the field or in judging his players. He never stole the camera's light from his players, and he gave them a mystique. If you were going to beat the Vikings in the cold in Minnesota, you had to come from Mars. The other guys stood around the hot air blowers on the sidelines. The Vikings stood still on their freezing toes, their freezing fingers under their armpits, and they stared.

"God, how I hated it," linebacker Roy Winston used to say. "Everybody thought we were supermen, facing the cold like that, but we were shivering as hard as the other guys and just dying to get inside. It was a front. But Ol' Bud, he kept telling us, 'You're going to be cold, but you've got to play. You may as well play hard. The other guys don't want to play in this stuff. Let's give them a reason.'"

NFL Photos

Players may come and go, but Viking mascot Thor is a constant on the Minnesota sideline.

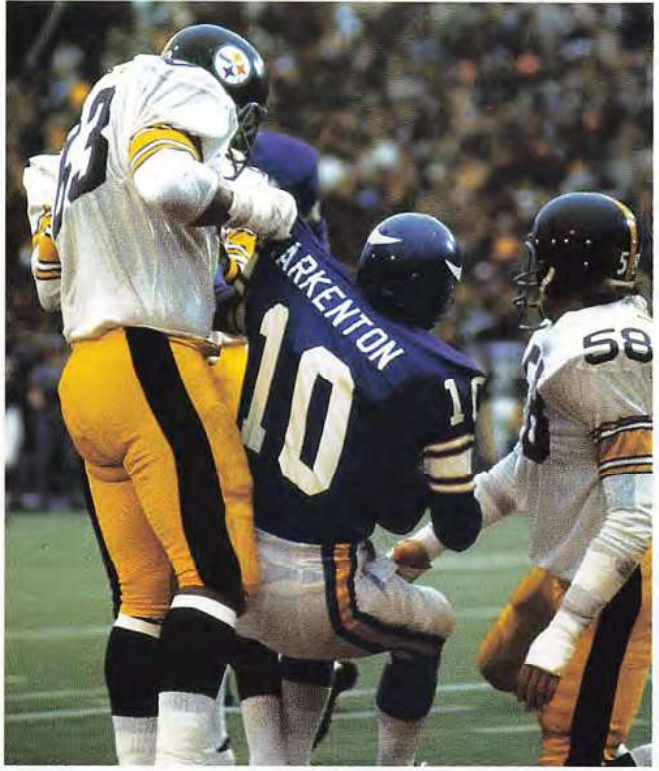
The Vikings almost always did. But it never snowed on a Super Bowl. Was that why the Vikings lost four out of four Super Bowls? Did they suffer from loss of mystique? Did the Vikings need the threat of hypothermia to win big football games?

As general manager, Jim Finks was called upon to talk one head coach (Van Brocklin) out of retiring, and later to hire another (Grant). He also helped mold the Vikings into the dominant team in the NFC.

NFL Photos

It was one of several-thousand theories that eventually surfaced in Minnesota to explain their warriors' malaise in the biggest of all football games. With each succeeding Super Bowl defeat, the depression grew deeper in the homeland. It was almost worse than a cancellation of the walleye fishing season. The explanations got more bizarre as the frustration mounted:

The Vikings played mechanically when they should have played fanatically; Tarkenton couldn't quarterback the big one; Grant couldn't coach the big one; Grant should have let the players room with their wives the weekend of the game; The de-



Tony Tomsic

Fran Tarkenton is sacked for a safety in the Steelers' 16-6 triumph in Super Bowl IX. It's a fitting symbol of Minnesota's futility in the Super Bowl, which included four losses in an eight-year span.

fense was underweight; Grant's national-monument disposition couldn't lift his team to an emotional high; Minnesota as a sovereign state couldn't win the big one; It was the Scandinavian syndrome infecting the football team—It's why Minnesota didn't win the presidency, didn't win its first World Series, and dropped to second in oats production. All of these things were said.

Finally, a pathologist suggested the problem had to do with blood flow. The Vikings played the last two months in cold weather. Their bodies acclimatized. When they played in Miami, Houston, New Orleans, and Pasadena, their cardiovascular systems couldn't adapt to warmth in time and they experienced something comparable to sleeping sickness at the Super Bowl.

Grant sifted through all of these theories noncommittally. He then offered another: There was at least an outside chance, he said, that the Vikings lost those four Super Bowl games because the other teams—Kansas City of 1969, Miami of 1973, Pittsburgh of 1974, and Oakland of 1976—were better.

It's a theory that never dawned on the homelanders and never acquired any popularity. It tells you what coaches know about winning and losing.

Although he coached indoors for four seasons, icy Bud Grant always looked more at home on the sideline of Metropolitan Stadium than in the spacious, sterilized Metrodome.

Tarkenton retired in the late 1970s, owning all of pro football's important passing records. The superb football team got old—Marshall, Page, Krause, Eller, Yary, Larsen, Tingelhoff, and the others. The relationship between Grant and Page disintegrated, and Page was traded. Ed White went elsewhere. Tommy Kramer succeeded Tarkenton with very little decline in the verve of the passing game. Kramer was a gruff, swashbuckling Texan who for several years was football's prime practitioner of the cardiac-arresting two-minute offense. He had trouble holding his grog but there was never any doubt about his nerve, his instincts, or the quality of his arm until the injuries started to mount.

In 1983, Grant suddenly found himself enchanted by the idea of duck hunting and fishing for 12 months of the year as a sensible alternative to coaching a .500 football team. In 18 seasons, his teams had won 168 games and lost 108, won four National Football Conference titles, and captured division championships almost annually from 1968 through the early 1980s.

The Vikings management hurled itself into a frenzy of generosity when Grant retired. He got enough boats and firearms to mount an invasion of Nicaragua.

Fred Anderson

FOOTBALL IN A COLD CLIMATE

Mike Lynn, by then the Vikings' general manager, installed Les Steckel to succeed Grant. Steckel was a bright and supercharged ex-Marine whose creed was to "take that hill." The Vikings went up the hill 16 times. There seemed to be more barbed wire than expected, though, and they made it to the top just three times. Lynn asked Grant to come back from the duck blinds the next year. He did, and he kept all of the retirement hardware. He also insisted on a contract that gave him six figures, virtually in perpetuity.

Peter Brouillet

An aggressive, attacking defense (right) has been the trademark of the Vikings in recent years. But not even a host of Pro Bowl players has been able to give Minnesota a chance at Super Bowl redemption.

Jim Chaffin

Tarkenton retired holding most NFL passing records. Still, the Vikings' offense hardly suffered a dropoff under the prolific Tommy Kramer (left).

He then coached one more year and resigned permanently. The game was changing. The players were less manageable. The Vikings had moved indoors to the Metrodome, and the image of a stone-faced Bud Grant staring stolidly through the snowflakes suddenly seemed obsolete.

By then Lynn and his associates had won a power struggle among the Vikings' board of directors. Max Winter had brought in Lynn from a sales job in Memphis in the 1970s to run the desks and deflect the lightning when the players and fans screamed about the Vikings' traditional payroll thrift, or about losing another Super Bowl.

By the 1980s, Lynn and Winter were squabbling. After a few years of that, Winter lost control to Lynn and sold his stock to Carl Pohlad, the Twins owner, and financier Irwin Jacobs. The sides still are warring over the ownership today.

With Grant gone, Lynn handed the coaching job to offensive coordinator Jerry Burns, a lovable squirt, a guy with decent impulses, no airs, and a vast fund of football knowledge and four-letter words.

Lynn put together a team that included Joey Browner, Chris Doleman, Darrin Nelson, Anthony Carter, Keith Millard, Gary Zimmerman, Steve Jordan, Wade Wilson, Carl Lee, and Mike Merriweather. The 1987 team, with most of those players on board, came within one dropped pass of beating Washington for the NFC title and reaching Super Bowl XXII.

So Lynn traded half of the Minnesota wheat crop to Dallas in exchange for running back Herschel Walker in 1989. "If Herschel takes us to the Super Bowl," Lynn said, "it's a good trade. If he doesn't, it isn't." It seemed a fair assessment. It was a colossal trade, a brassy trade, costing the Vikings five veteran players and years of high draft choices.

Rick Kolodziej

General manager Mike Lynn (right) sacrificed veterans and high draft choices to obtain running back Herschel Walker in 1989. "If Herschel takes us to the Super Bowl," Lynn said, "it's a good trade."

In the midst of the turmoil, Lynn left his post in 1990 to run the World League of American Football. Like a thoughtful departing king, he anointed his friend, Roger Headrick, to be his successor. Headrick is a man with wide business experience but a football novice, which was Lynn's resumé 15 years before. Lynn left the WLAF after a year to get re-embroiled in the ownership court fight, leaving Headrick, Burns, the quarreling ownership camps, and Thor, the mascot with his Viking horns, to achieve serenity.

Serenity with the Minnesota Vikings is theoretically possible. So is a Super Bowl championship. There are those who insist both are violations of natural law. Maybe.

On the other hand, who would have imagined a few years ago a Super Bowl being played in Minnesota the last week of January, with the ice three feet thick on Lake Minnetonka and Bud Grant somewhere in Canada, spearing fish? ■

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SPOTLIGHT

EUGENE McCARTHY ON FOOTBALL

HE WAS OF A DIFFERENT KIND

Two decades ago a sportswriter asked nine leading American historians and social and cultural commentators, "What is the role of the National Football League in American history?" Of the nine experts who responded to the sportswriter's inquiry, only one found any positive social or cultural good coming out of the NFL, in or after its 50 years of existence. The views of the other eight ranged from those who said they had no ideas about the league's influence on history and no interest in trying to find out, to the absolute and final judgment of historian Henry Steele Commager, who said that the NFL had "no importance whatsoever."

One gets the impression these same experts might very well have given the same answers had they been asked to evaluate the effect of poetry on American history in the same 50 years. One might say of football, as W. H. Auden said of poetry, that "it makes nothing happen," but it survives in its own way, a "happening." The judgment of the immediate experts obviously was different from Auden's judgment of poetry. Perhaps they were too farsighted to see football's effects on contemporary historical and cultural realities, or their insights too penetrating to note the obvious. The influence of football, like that of poetry, is not obvious or superficial or broadly social, but subtle and personal.

It provides lasting memories of personal triumphs and failures, and also of team victories and losses, whether the experience is in sand lot, high school, college, or professional games.

When a football player rises to thank his coach and his teammates at a victory or an award banquet, he gives proper credit. When a player does the same at a baseball or basketball function, such thanks often must be taken as partly ritualistic.

The experience of football, either by players or spectators, always must be weighed upon the scales of individual experience and team experience. Vicarious satisfaction of the spectator is more complete than that attained from watching most other sports. It can be measured and observed in a fixed frame of time and space. The field is measured, length and width, not projected within the extended lines of right triangle, as is the case with a baseball diamond, nor is the size of the field variable among different levels of competition, as is a basketball court or a hockey rink. A baseball game theoretically may last forever. Time is not "taken out" in baseball but "called." It might never come back. In football, quarters are measured. Time outs are taken, for minutes or seconds. Plays must be started within fixed time limits.

Football players and their fans clearly remember great plays, great games, and players who were great, if only for a day, or less. Several years ago I visited a friend who had been in college with me 50 years earlier. He was dying of cancer. I remembered him as a freshman in his first intrasquad practice game. He ran the opening kickoff through the varsity—a championship team of the previous season—for a touchdown. In the end, however, he never made the team. On that day I saw him in the hospital, he said, "That was a high moment of my life. I didn't know that anyone had seen that run or remembered it." He died soon after.

After all the heroes of the past and present have been talked about, all the great games and plays recalled and retold, the name of Johnny Blood (McNally) is spoken. It is like the names of the Irish patriots of whom the poet Yeats wrote:

They were of a different kind
The names that stilled your childish play
They went 'round the world like wind.

The power of his name was strong and very much alive when I went to St. John's University in Minnesota in the 1930s. John McNally played his college football at St. John's in the 1920s. He enrolled in 1920. In his three years at St. John's, he won three letters each in football and basketball, two in track, and two in baseball. It was while playing college sports at St. John's that he began his professional football career, and took on his professional name of Johnny Blood. The often-told story of the change of name is that he took it from the title of the movie *Blood and Sand* as a cover while he was playing semipro football in Minneapolis—at the same time he was playing collegiate football at St. John's.

Limited athletic achievement can take on significant proportions for public figures. After I got to the Senate, it was reported that I had been scouted as a first baseman by the Chicago White Sox, or reported accurately that I had been the high scorer on the St. John's hockey team in a championship year, and that I had played against the great goalie Frankie Brimsech, of later fame as "Mr. Zero" with the Boston Bruins. The response to these statements, claims, or admissions was nothing compared to the reaction, when, with modesty and truth, I reported that I had played end on a team that included John McNally's brother Jim at the opposite end. The team was the college sophomore intramural team. The McNally connection was magic.

Johnny Blood played 21 years of professional football, 15 of them in the National Football League. He was one of the original 17 players inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1963.

People who knew Johnny Blood thought about him, tried to understand him, and then attempted to speak or write about him both before and after his death.

In 1955, Ernie Nevers, a former teammate, said, "When I think of Green Bay, I think of Johnny Blood. Offhand, I'd say he

was the most unbelievable character in pro ball."

When John Kennedy met McNally for the first time, during the Wisconsin Presidential campaign of 1960, he said, "Your name was a household word in our home."

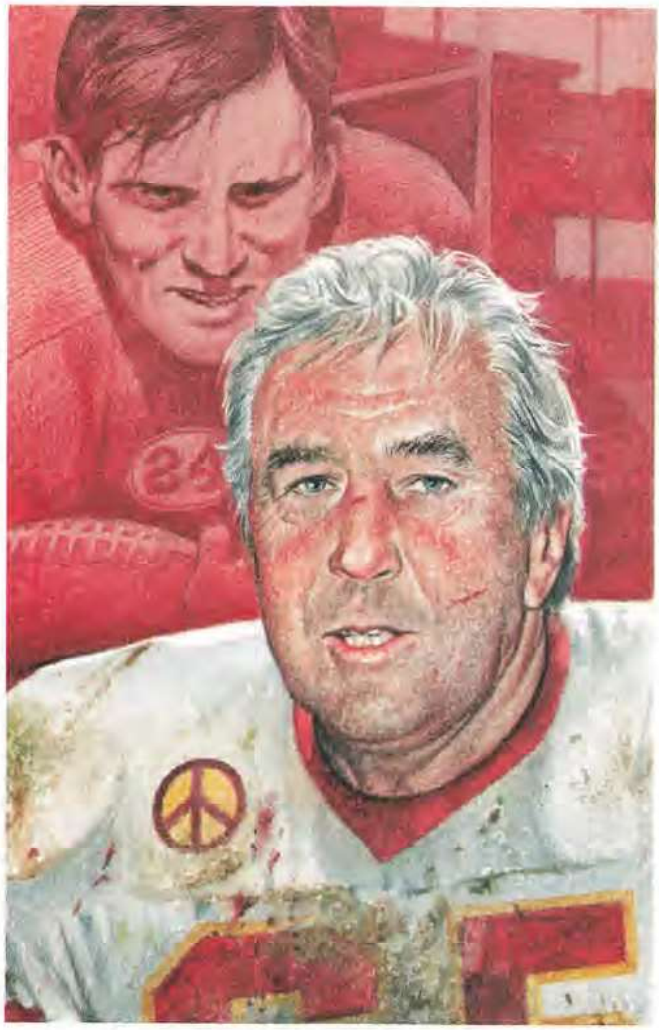
In a 1963 tribute to McNally, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Byron White wrote, "Not only was John a magnificent player and a brilliant entertainer, but he had the rarest of all qualities, namely, giving his greatest performances when the greatest was required. This, of course, is the hallmark, historically, of the great athlete, and it is also one of the major tests which time applies to the deeds of men."

"There never was a guy in football like Blood—never," wrote Oliver Kuechle of the *Milwaukee Journal*, following Blood's death in 1985. "All who ever played with him agree—the Cal Hubbards, the Lavvie Dilwegs, the Bo Molendas, the Cecil Isbells, the Don Hutsons, an impossible lot of contemporaries at first glance, perhaps, but really not impossible at all, for Johnny Blood's course ran through the National Football League for fifteen years."

As a special tribute to Johnny, the NFL, which prohibits the use of false names in its records, made an exception. He is remembered forever as "Blood," with parentheses for the unknowing so that there may be no confusion, and that all who read shall know that the "two in one" is Johnny Blood (McNally).

Johnny returned to St. John's in 1950 as a student, 30 years after he had rejected Notre Dame and Dartmouth and gone to St. John's the first time. He became a professor and coach. His problem as coach, it was said, was that he designed his offense and defense as though he were playing every position.

As a professor, his interests ranged from football to philosophy and literature. Captain Ahab in his contest with Moby Dick, Johnny observed, "had the courage of ignorance, comparable to the courage of a fullback playing his first season of professional football."



Merv Corning

When I took a run at the Democratic nomination for President as a Senator from Minnesota in 1968, Johnny Blood helped lead the interference for me. For years after that—and especially in 1972—he traveled around the nation telling people they should vote for me. Some of his travels I heard about years later.

Johnny summed up his philosophy of life, and the role of football in his life, in these words: "There are literally thousands of different ways that people can express themselves. It's dazzling how many different gifts are locked up in the genes of the human race. And some people have the gift of football. That is what they can do. And they will do it whether you pay them or not."

Football was Johnny Blood's gift.

I last saw him at the Touchdown Club awards dinner in Washington, D.C., in January, 1977. The St. John's University team had won the national small college championship and its coach was John Gagliardi, who had succeeded McNally as coach 24 years earlier. In the midst of giving out awards, introducing stars, owners, and other notables, someone at the head table noticed John, at the rear of the room. He had come uninvited and unannounced to be there while his school was honored.

When his name was called, he reluctantly stepped out into the spotlight, tall, ascetic looking, white haired, in a black rain coat. A strange silence fell upon the crowd. It was as though both those who knew who Johnny Blood was, and those who did not, sensed that someone different and special was present. The applause was restrained, reverent, prolonged.

Someone had come back from another time—a knight errant of medieval times, or one of the heroes of Irish mythology, Finn, perhaps, or better Cuchulain, of whom an Irish bard wrote:

They gazed with mournful wonder on his eyes
As Spring upon more ancient skies
While all about the harpstrings sang his praise
And Conchubar, the King, with his own fingers
touched the brazen strings.

As I write this in late November, the Washington Redskins are unbeaten and I am thinking that I will be in Minneapolis in late January. For obvious reasons, the Vikings always have held a strong place in my heart, but a few years ago I began to get involved with the Redskins. I would call my friend Edward Bennett Williams whenever Washington played the Cowboys or some other good team. When Jack Kent Cooke took control of the team, he sort of "adopted" me, which is to say he insisted that I sit in his box for all Redskins home games. I must say that it is a rather wonderful place from which to watch a football game.

Wherever I am today—in the Metrodome or watching on TV with a fire in the fireplace—I wish the knight errant could be with me. We would share some laughs. We would talk about life. We would enjoy watching the game together. ■

SPOTLIGHT

PAUL BUNYAN WITH A FOOTBALL

Bronko Nagurski Had the Stuff of Legends

BY JOHN WIEBUSCH

Illustrations: Lisa French

Legend (lej'end), n. 1. An unverified popular story handed down from earlier times. 2. A body or collection of such stories. 3. A romanticized or popularized myth of modern times. 4. A person who achieves legendary fame.

—AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY

In the Gordian knot of real and unreal, of happened and might have happened, Bronko Nagurski was all the above, a man bigger than life when he played, a name still bigger than life today, two years after his death in January, 1990.

His name. To say it is to say strength and power and hair-on-the-chest maleness. Bronko Nagurski. The sounds are almost male-chauvinistic. Bronko Nagurski. Treetop tall, able to leap football fields in a single bound, earth mover. Paul Bunyan in the midst of us.

One year when it rained from St. Patrick's Day till the Fourth of July, Paul Bunyan got disgusted because his celebration of the Fourth was spoiled. He dived into Lake Superior and swam to where a solid pillar of water was coming down. He dived under this pillar, swam up into it, and climbed with powerful swimming strokes, was gone about an hour, came splashing down, and as the rain stopped, he explained, "I turned the damn thing off." This is told in the Big North Woods and on the Great Lakes with many particulars.

—CARL SANDBURG

Bronislaw (Bronko) Nagurski lived in International Falls, Minnesota, on the Canadian border. The Rainy River flows through International Falls five months of the year. The other seven months it is frozen rock-solid. International Falls is called the Icebox of the Nation. Men in plaid wool shirts with ruddy faces smile through their beers there and say, "You got to be hardy to live here."

Bronko Nagurski lived there all his life, for 81 winters and 81 summers. He was there pumping gas in the station that bore his name until the late 1970s. He was there answering questions about where the smallmouth bass were hitting. He was there in the big North Woods, leading a quiet life while the legends grew around him.

Red Grange couldn't swear the story was true. But the man who told it to him swore it was, and that was good enough for Grange, who played with Bronko Nagurski for the Chicago Bears and who, with Nagurski, became a charter member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1963.

"In the mid-sixties, Doc Spears, Bronko's coach at the University of Minnesota, was in Florida visiting me," Grange said a decade ago (he died at age 87 last January 28, the day after Super Bowl XXV was played). "I asked Spears how he'd ever come across a guy like Bronko in a place like International Falls. Spears said that he had gone up there from Minneapolis to see another kid. He thought the kid's name was Smith. Spears told me that just outside of International Falls he saw this young kid pushing a plow. There was no horse or anything else—just this kid pushing a plow! Spears stopped the car and asked the kid just where he might find this Smith fellow. Well, Doc swears the kid with the plow just picked it up and pointed in the direction. Doc knew that Smith or no Smith, he had to have this kid, too. The kid was Bronko Nagurski."

One bright spring morning Paul Bunyan discovered that the billions of feet of logs that he and his men had cut and dragged down to the banking grounds during the winter were landlocked in a lake in Northern Minnesota. Without blinking an eyelash, Paul ordered Ole, his great Swede blacksmith, to make an enormous shovel. Paul took this shovel one morning before breakfast, and started to dig a canal through to the Gulf of Mexico. He took his direction from the path the wildfowl had cleft in the air during their last migration. He shoveled so fast that soon the sun was darkened as if by total eclipse. The dirt that flew over his right shoulder formed the Rocky Mountains, and what he hurled in the opposite direction (there wasn't any room in the sky, you understand, to throw the dirt one way) became the Appalachians. Paul reached the Gulf at the end of the first day just as the sun was about to set. He flicked a hundred gallons of sweat from his brow with his forefinger, flung his shovel down with a grunt and a smile, and galloped back to camp before the last light was put out for the night.

—JAMES CLOYD BOWMAN

In three years with the University of Minnesota varsity, the teams Bronko Nagurski

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played with lost only four games, three of them by one point and one by two points.

But it is not the winning or the losing they remember. It is Bronko Nagurski. In three years he played every position except center and quarterback, and, in his senior year, in 1929, sportswriter Grantland Rice named only 10 men to the All-America football team. Bronko Nagurski was named at two positions—tackle and fullback.

'I'm telling you, Hubbard socked the Bronk a good one, but the guy who went down was Hubbard himself.'

In a game against Northwestern that year, they say Bronko Nagurski scored a touchdown from 12 yards, and that during that run every member of the Northwestern defense took a shot at him. When Bronko came down in the end zone it was only because he hit a stack of lumber.

A similar thing had happened the year before, when Minnesota played Wisconsin. Bronko had suffered an injury to his spine, but he insisted on playing with a steel brace. Late in the game, with both teams scoreless, Minnesota moved close to the Wisconsin goal line. They gave the ball to Nagurski four consecutive times, and on the last effort he took it into the end zone. There were six Wisconsin players on his back when he scored.

Paul Bunyan was very big for his age, of course, but he was never clumsy as many big boys are. Once—the first time he ever went hunting— he sneaked his father's old shotgun out of the house and set forth to see what he could find. He kept his sharp eyes wide open and at last he saw a deer stick its head around a tree four or five miles away. He blazed away at the animal with the old gun, and then was so anxious to see if he had killed it that he started for the spot, lippity-cut. He ran so fast that he outran the load he had fired from the gun, with the result that he got the full charge of the buckshot in the seat of his breeches.

—WALLACE WADSWORTH

Bronko Nagurski joined the Chicago Bears of the National Football League in 1930, but he was preceded by his reputation. Already he was a folk hero. There was the story about how he ran six miles to and from high school every day in International Falls (even in the winter)...about how he single-handedly lifted a truck off a dying man...about how he rescued another man who'd been buried under a pile of logs at a sawmill.

The pros were disbelievers, and it is not difficult to see why. They sought softness in the legend early.

In 1930, the Green Bay Packers were the lords of professional football. They had Johnny Blood (McNally) to run the ball and a man-mountain tackle, Cal Hubbard, to clear a path. Hubbard weighed 250 pounds. He was a big man by the standards of any age, but six decades ago he was Herculean.

The story was told by none other than Red Grange:

"The Bronk and I were on one side protecting the punter on fourth-down plays. Well, the game was getting along and the Packers were beating us and Hubbard passed me after one play and said, 'Next time you guys punt, let me by. I won't block the kick. I just want to get a shot at that Nagurski and see if he's as tough as they say he is.' So the next time we went into punt formation I let Hubbard get past me and I turned around to watch. I'm telling you, Hubbard socked the Bronk a good one, but the guy who went down was Hubbard himself. Hubbard caught up with me as we left the field. He said, 'The kid is as hard as they said he was.'"

I will endeavor to give you an idea of the size of the real Paul Bunyan, something no other man has been able to give the public without resorting to untruths.

From the soles of his feet to the roots of his hair he split the atmosphere exactly 16 feet 11 inches. His weight, he told me, was 888 pounds.

But what interested me most was his face. He had the most unusual eyes I ever have seen. The distance between his eyes was 17 inches. They were the size of ordinary saucers. His nose resembled a fresh leg of mutton. When he opened his mouth in one of his prodigious yawns, one could have inserted a ten-quart pail.

—EARL CLIFTON BECK

In 1963, Bronko Nagurski was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He did not receive his Hall of Fame ring until the following year, however. The reason for the delay was that the L.G. Balfour Co. had to make a size 19½ ring. Balfour officials say the ring is one of the largest ever made in the United States.

George Halas, another charter member of the Hall of Fame who coached Bronko as a professional, once said of him, "I assure you that you will not see a more remarkable physical specimen anywhere. He was six feet two inches and he weighed two hundred thirty-four pounds and it was all—literally all—muscle, skin, and bone. He didn't have an ounce of fat on him. A lot of men have passed in front of me but none with a build like that man."

Beattie Feathers played with Bronko Nagurski. "He had the most incredible natural strength I've ever seen," Feathers said. "One time we were up in Green Bay working out on the Saturday afternoon before the game. We were all just running around and tossing the ball about when Halas called us into the huddle. The starting team gathered around Halas, and he told us to line up in formation to run a few plays. I didn't see Bronko and I said to Halas, 'Coach, we don't have a fullback.' I didn't realize it, but Bronko was standing right behind me. Well, Bronko gave me what he thought was a friendly bop on the helmet, and it knocked me down. He was so big and so powerful I don't believe even he knew how strong he really was."

Gene Ronzani was the Bears' quarterback for most of the Nagurski years. "Here I was coming out of Marquette," Ronzani said, "and I tell you, just the thought of playing with Bronko Nagurski scared the hell out of me. When I saw him, I became more of a believer. Not only was he as big and strong as advertised and not only was he a humble fellow and an all-around good guy, but he was the second-fastest man on the Bears. And his toughness! He had a bad knee and sometimes he would come limping back to the huddle. I'd ask him if he wanted a time out and he'd say, 'Time out? Hell no, let's play football.' Then he would slap his knee on either side with that big hand of his—slapping the cartilage back in place. We'd shake our heads and away we'd go and Bronko would carry the ball."

The epic battles of the day were between Clarke Hinkle, fullback and linebacker for the Packers, and Bronko Nagurski, fullback and linebacker for the Bears. It was survival of the fittest then; it was mutual admiration later.

"I felt I could play football with anyone,"

PAUL BUNYAN WITH A FOOTBALL

Hinkle said, "and I was particularly anxious to go after Bronko because he was the best. The first time I came up against him I made the mistake of letting him come to me before I made the tackle—or tried to make it. I needed seven stitches to close up the cut on my chin. It was murder, but you had to go after him to be effective. If you didn't you were through.

"Once I went over right tackle and cut toward the sidelines and I saw that Bronko had me cornered. I knew that in blocking or tackling he rarely left his feet. Nor did he rap his arms around a runner in making a tackle. He merely used to block or tackle with his shoulder or hip or forearm—and that got the job done. This one time I pivoted straight toward Bronko before he hit me. I lowered my shoulder and smashed into and over him. He suffered a broken nose and a fractured rib on that play, but it didn't keep him out of the rest of the game."

In 1936, two members of the Pittsburgh team attempted to stop Bronko Nagurski from reaching the end zone. One man suffered a broken shoulder; the other was knocked out.

On the train carrying the Pittsburgh team home from Chicago, the Pirates (later the Steelers) played cards and talked about the Bears' fullback. Suddenly the train gave an unusually violent lurch and the bodies of football players were strewn in the aisles.

"Run for your lives," shouted halfback Warren Heller. "It's Nagurski!"

One day Paul Bunyan climbed a tree during a violent windstorm. After he got to the top it started to blow eighteen hurricanes. After a few minutes Paul and the tree went sailing off into space.

After traveling for days in the air, Paul began to drop. When he hit he made a hole over nine hundred miles long and a good many miles wide. Paul was so tired that he fell asleep before investigating his new surroundings. He had a terrible nightmare that caused him to sweat so much that the hole was filled with water. Years later Henry Hudson found this hole and named it Hudson Bay after himself.

—EARL CLIFTON BECK

Maybe truth isn't stranger than fiction (as Lord Byron wrote), but sometimes it's almost a dead heat.

Once, in a game against Portsmouth in 1933, Bronko Nagurski went 45 yards for the winning touchdown, sending two linebackers flying in different directions, running over the defensive halfback, and straight-arming the safety aside before colliding with the goal post and caroming into the brick wall at Wrigley Field in Chicago. "The last guy hit me awful hard," Bronko said after he was revived.

Once, in a game against Green Bay in 1934, Bronko powered through three tacklers into the end zone, crashing head-on into the steel netting protecting the box seats.

Steve Owen was the head coach of the New York Giants. He once said of Nagurski, "He's the only man I've ever seen who runs his own interference."

Lest you smile at fond remembrance, consider this from Beattie Feathers: "When we got near the goal line we didn't put any blockers ahead of Bronko. He was fast, but he was not a quick starter, and we didn't want to take a chance of him getting tripped up by his own blockers."

Steve Owen, head coach of the Giants, once said of Nagurski, 'He's the only man I've ever seen who runs his own interference.'

Gene Ronzani: "He had that strong forearm and enormous shoulders and he'd just stick his arm out and batter people out of the way."

Mel Hein, center-linebacker for the Giants: "Coaches always told you to tackle a big running back low, so I tried to tackle Bronko low the first time I faced him, and he stampeded me. But if you tried to tackle him high, he kept right on going. We found that the only way to bring him down was to have at least two tacklers. And often that didn't work."

Chris Crosshaul was a careless cuss. He took a big drive down the Mississippi for Paul Bunyan and when the logs were delivered in New Orleans it was found that he had driven the wrong ones. It was up to Paul to drive them back upstream. No one but Paul Bunyan would ever tackle a job like that. To drive logs upstream is impossible, but if you think a little thing like an impossibility could stop him, you don't know Paul Bunyan. He simply fed Babe (the Blue Ox) a good big salt ration and drove him to the upper Mississippi to drink. Babe drank the river dry and sucked all the water upstream. The logs came up river faster than they went down.

—W.B. LAUGHEAD

Bronko Nagurski was more than just another routine Superman.

"He could have been an All-America at any position," said Doc Spears, his college coach.

Charles Johnson and Dick Cullum were two of the most respected sports journalists of their time. Both men saw Bronko Nagurski play for the University of Minnesota and for the Bears. Both men wrote about what they saw for Minneapolis newspapers.

"Bronk really could have been the best at anything he tried," Johnson said. "In many ways, he was the Babe Ruth of football. They both could do it all. The difference was, the Bronk did it less flamboyantly because that was his nature. He's a very basic, simple man who's uncomfortable when he gets a lot of attention."

"The truth is," Cullum said, "that Bronko Nagurski may not even have been the University of Minnesota's finest fullback. That distinction may belong to Herb Joesting [a senior fullback in Bronko's sophomore year]. But I don't disparage Bronko's talents as a fullback...hardly. He was an All-America, and I think he was the best fullback ever to play in the NFL.

"But the man's versatility was so remarkable. I remember one game at Iowa when Minnesota was severely crippled and figured to lose. But Nagurski played tremendously at five positions—end, tackle, guard, halfback, and fullback. When Bronk went to the Chicago Bears, he fit immediately into the fullback position and was not tried anywhere else.

"Yet his friends could not help but wish he had tried some other positions, too. They knew he was a better end and a better tackle than he was a fullback, yet he was enough fullback to be called the best in NFL history. That's a measure of greatness."

Paul Bunyan was of a tremendous size and strength, the strongest man that ever swung an axe. He had curly black hair which his loving wife used to comb for him every morning with a great crosscut saw, after first parting it nicely with a broadax, and a big, black beard that

was as long as it was wide and as wide as it was long. He was rather proud of this beard and took good care of it. Several times every day he would pull up a young pine tree by the roots and use its stiff branches in combing and brushing it smooth.

—WALLACE WADSWORTH

The statistics of the early days of professional football were something less than official, and the yardage totals attributed to Bronko Nagurski only can be approximate. It is certain that he carried the ball more than 600 times and gained some 3,000 yards in his final seven seasons.

But is that the measure of the man?

How do you measure his blocking? In the first 27 years of the NFL, only one man, Beattie Feathers, rushed for 1,000 yards in one season. Feathers gained 1,004 yards in 1934 for the Bears (averaging a phenomenal 9.9 yards per carry), and the men who were there claim Nagurski ran interference on almost every play.

How do you measure the 60-minute player? "If I'd played one way," Bronko Nagurski once said, "I could have played another fifteen years."

Bronko could pass, too, and did.

In 1933, the NFL divided into two divisions for the first time. The Bears opposed the New York Giants in the championship game, and their knockout punch was the passing arm of Bronko Nagurski. The big fullback passed to Bill Karr for one touchdown, then brought the Bears to a 23-21 victory when he passed to Bill Hewitt, who lateraled to Karr to complete a 32-yard touchdown play.

"Bronko would buck up to the line," said Mel Hein of the Giants, "and you'd have to come in to meet him as a linebacker. Then he'd stand straight up and lob a little pass. We all knew it was coming, but we couldn't afford to concentrate on it because we couldn't afford to give Bronko any running room.

A favorite lumberjack sport is rolling a log. A man stands on a big log afloat in the water and starts turning it with his feet, keeping his feet going so that he is always on top and standing safely upright, no matter how fast he gets the log to whirling under him. Paul Bunyan could roll a log so fast that it made foam on the water solid enough for him to walk ashore on, and he is known to have crossed wide rivers in this way. Not all of this foam which he thus caused has disappeared to this day and occasionally small bits of it may still be seen floating down many streams after heavy rain.

—WALLACE WADSWORTH

He was the player of his time—perhaps of all time—but his time was not a time of great reward because it was the time of the Great Depression.

In 1965, Bronko Nagurski told Milton Richman of *United Press International*: "The first contract I signed with him [owner George Halas] was for five thousand dollars. Even though I had a good year, my salary was cut to forty-five hundred my second year. The Depression was on, the club was losing money, and we had to take cuts.

> *'I watch a lot of modern football, and I wonder if I could be happy playing it because I could only play half the time.'*

"I got thirty-seven hundred my third year with the Bears and that's where my salary stayed for a number of years. They upped my pay to five thousand in 1937 when I talked about retiring, and when I asked for six thousand in 1938 they turned me down. I went home figuring they'd call me, but they never did. Not until five years later."

In 1943, World War II had decimated the Bears' talent. Three tackles and two guards were gone from the 1942 team. They called Nagurski, then a couple of months short of 35, and asked if he was interested in coming back to play tackle. He was.

"And once he started to play," Ronzani said, "he was the same old Bronk."

In his first game, against the Packers, he was hit by Ted Fritsch, a young fullback. Fritsch was knocked unconscious.

Nagurski remained at tackle for most of the season, until injuries sidelined both of the Bears' fullbacks for the final game of the regular season against the Chicago Cardinals. Bronko carried the ball 16 times for 84 yards that day, scoring 1 touchdown and setting up 2 others in a 35-24 victory.

The Bears trounced the Washington Redskins for the NFL championship to end the season, and Nagurski saw action again as a fullback. In his farewell to football, he scored a touchdown.

Even when he was an old man, or what would be old for most men, Paul Bunyan was so quick on his feet that he could blow out the light in the bunkhouse at night, and be in bed asleep before the room got dark.

—W.B. LAUGHEAD

Bronko Nagurski was a man of basics, a man who did not demand much of life except a square deal. And he felt he didn't always get that. He felt his career was shorted prematurely...he felt that his days as a professional wrestler (he was an enormous attraction in the 1930s and 1940s) were degrading...he felt that he and other early players should have been included in the NFL Players Association pension plan.

In the last 15 years of his life, he had to undergo major surgery on his knees and he was dogged by arthritis. He seldom granted interviews, choosing instead to guard his privacy.

He lived in International Falls with Eileen, his wife of more than 50 years and the mother of their six children.

"I have no regrets, I'll tell you," he said. "Nothing I would change, anyway. I watch a lot of modern football, and I wonder if I could be happy playing it because I could only play half the time. And I wonder what I'd be playing. I like to carry the ball, but I expect that they'd end up using me the same way the Bears did with Dick Butkus. I'd like that, too. I was very much like Butkus—big and mobile. Besides, I guess I liked defense a little better."

In his mid-seventies at the time, he was asked to confirm a story about how he used to enter a room holding his wife out at arm's length.

"That's right," he said, "and I can still do it, only Eileen won't let me."

Who made Paul Bunyan, who gave him birth as a myth, who joked him into life as the Master Lumberjack, who fashioned him forth as an apparition easing the hours of men amid axes and trees, saws and lumber? The people, the bookless people, they made Paul and had him alive long before he got into the books for those who read. And some of Paul is as old as the hills, young as the alphabet.

—CARL SANDBURG ■

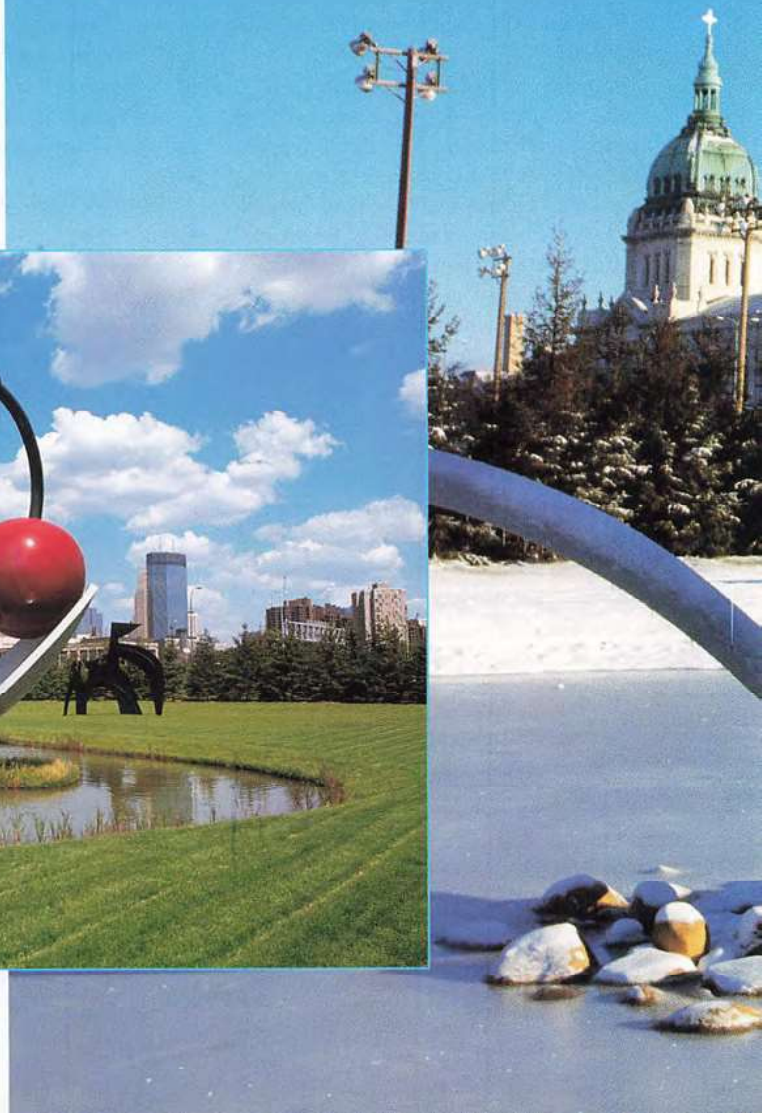
SPOTLIGHT

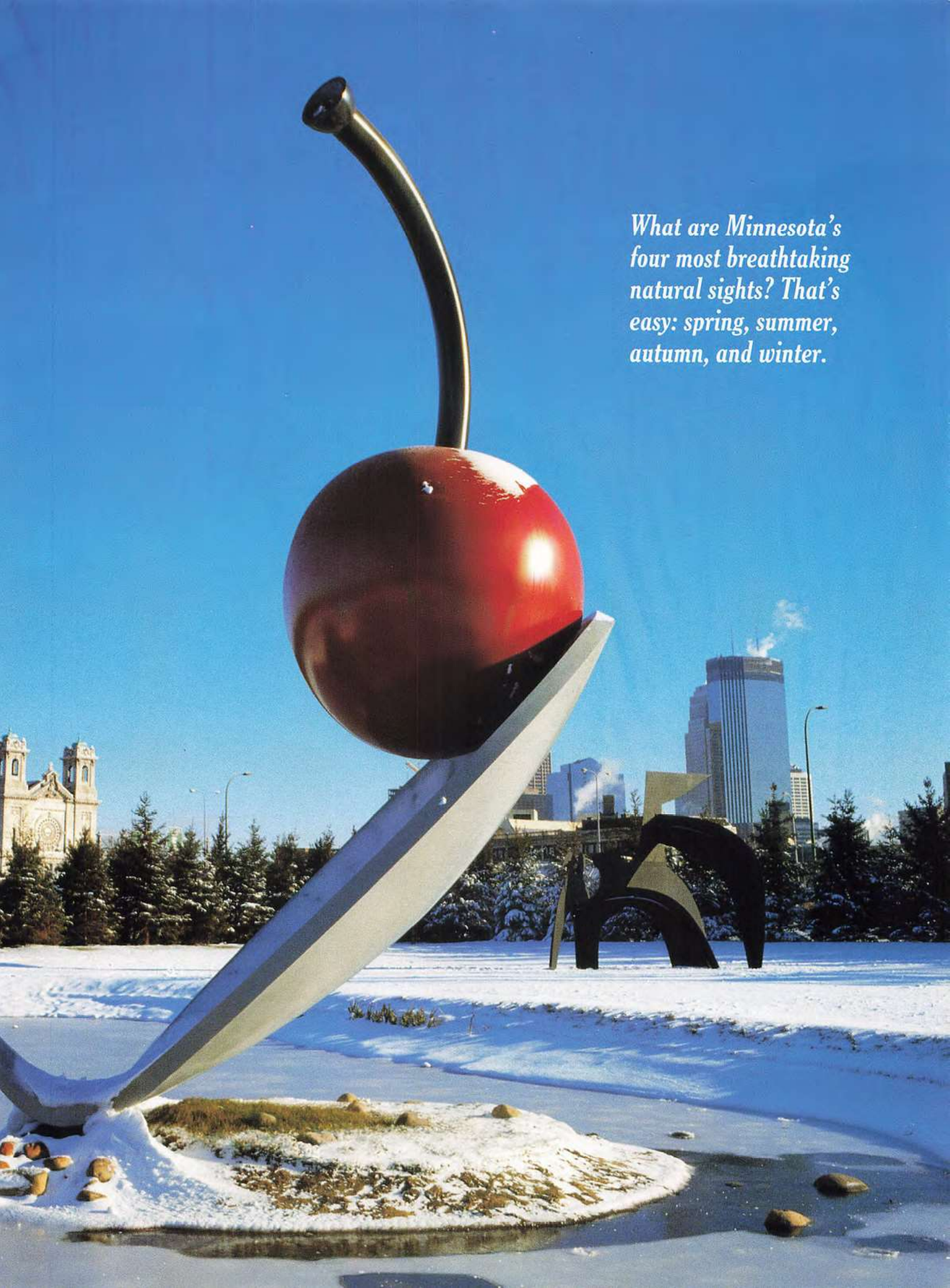
SEASONS TO TASTE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
AL MESSERSCHMIDT
AND TIM STEINBERG

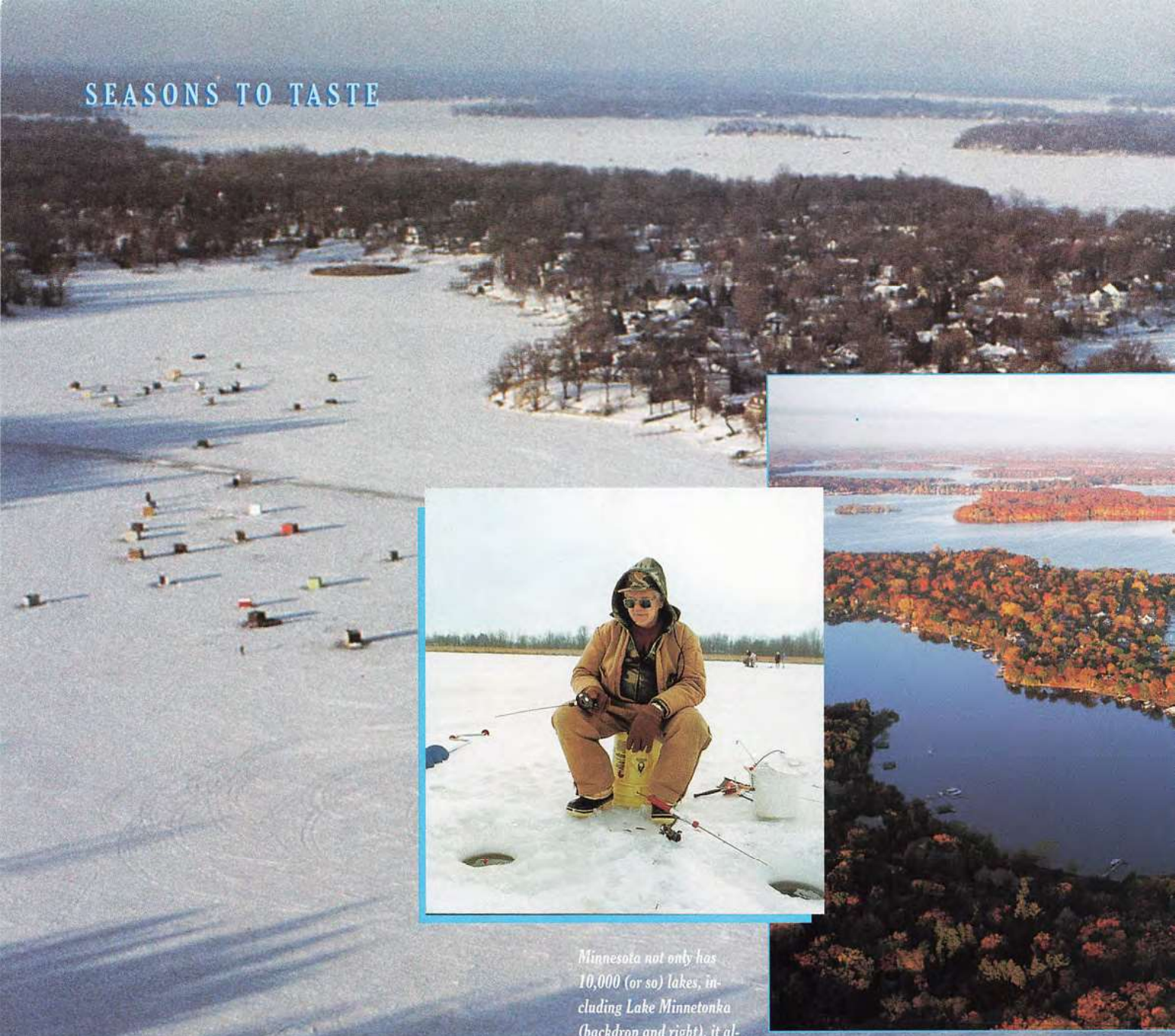
So, have you had your colors tested lately? Is spring your thing, or do you fall for autumn hues? If you're not really sure, you couldn't choose a better testing ground than Minneapolis-St. Paul and the surrounding countryside. The seasons don't change in Minnesota, they explode at three-month intervals. Winter, by turns cruel and dazzling in its icy splendor, is the defining presence at Super Bowl XXVI. Yet, come back for the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in early April, and you'll hardly recognize the place. In fact, you'll hardly be able to *see* the place beneath the flowering foliage. Return again in October as the Twins attempt to defend their Major League Baseball championship, and the tableau again will have been re-created. Minnesota, it seems, has seasonal scenery to suit any visitor, no matter how thin the blood or thick the parka.

Whether you prefer your sculpted fruit frozen or thawed, the Walker Art Center and adjacent Minneapolis Sculpture Garden (both photos at right) offer something to please your artistic palate, including this sculpture by Claes Oldenburg and his wife, Coosje van Bruggen. The Walker, just a few minutes from downtown, houses one of the nation's finest collections of contemporary art.



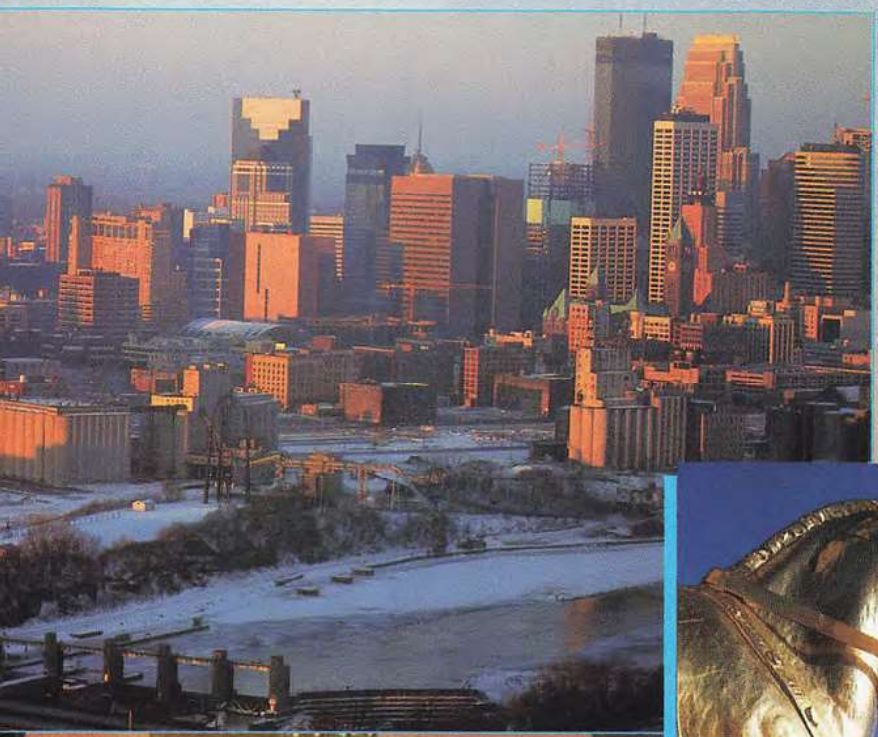


What are Minnesota's four most breathtaking natural sights? That's easy: spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

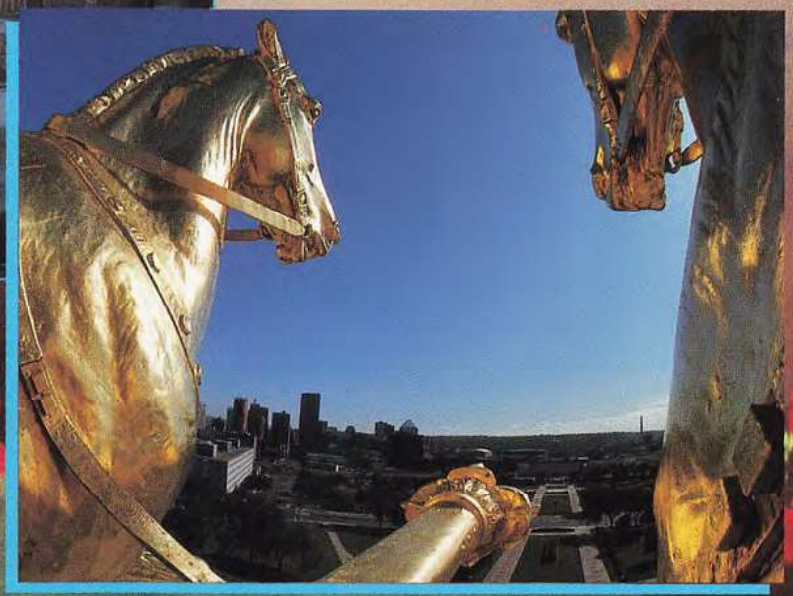


Minnesota not only has 10,000 (or so) lakes, including Lake Minnetonka (backdrop and right), it also has devised about 10,000 ways to use those lakes for human activity. Though it is one of the area's most ancient pursuits, fishing hasn't lost much of its popularity over the years. In the winter (above), you don't even need a boat to catch a dinner of walleye pike.

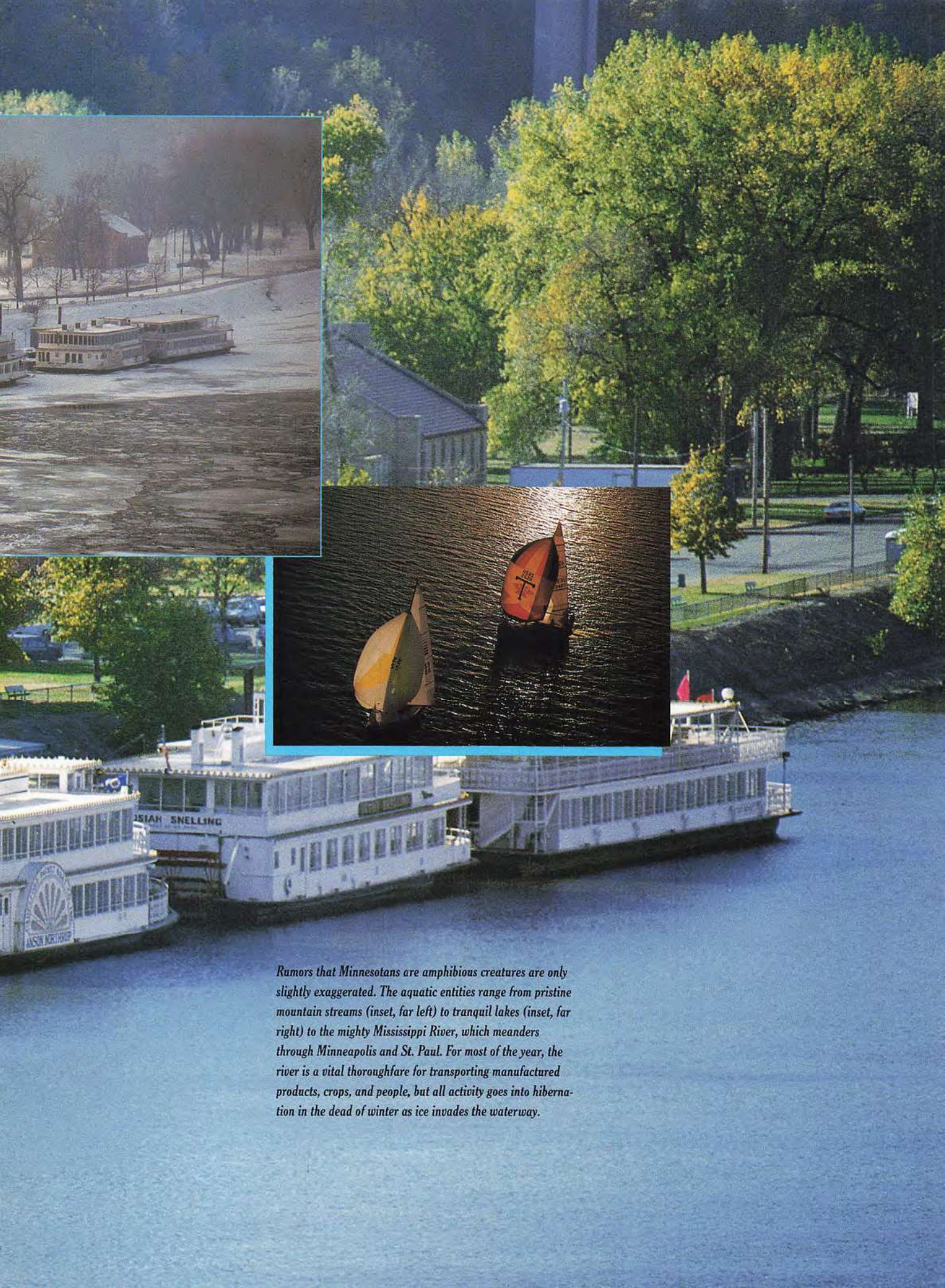
SEASONS TO TASTE



On Super Bowl Sunday, all roads lead to the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, which has graced the downtown Minneapolis skyline since 1982. That skyline (left)—a cosmopolitan burst in the heart of the breadbasket—is more imposing than that of neighboring St. Paul, which can be seen between the steeds gracing the Minnesota State Capitol (below).



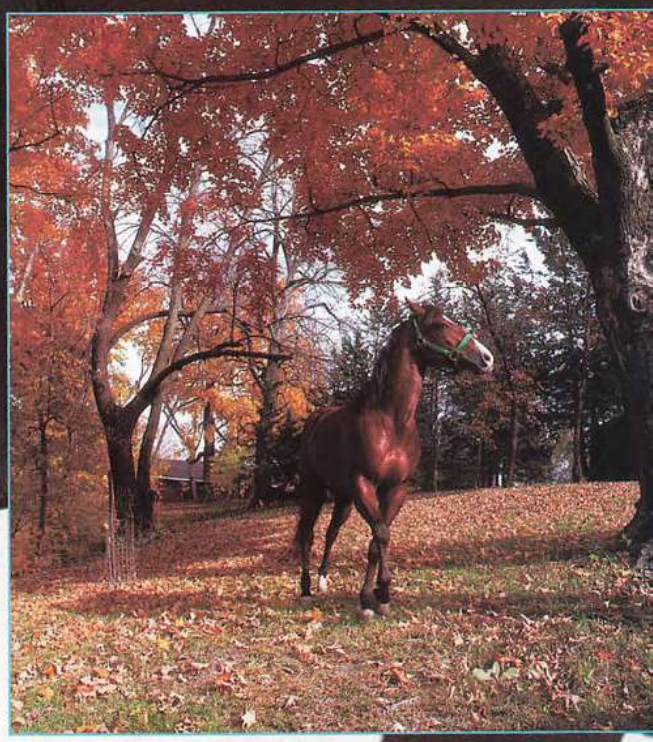
JONATHAN PADELFORD
JONATHAN PADELFORD
PADELFORD
SHANTYBOAT
ANSON NORTHRUP



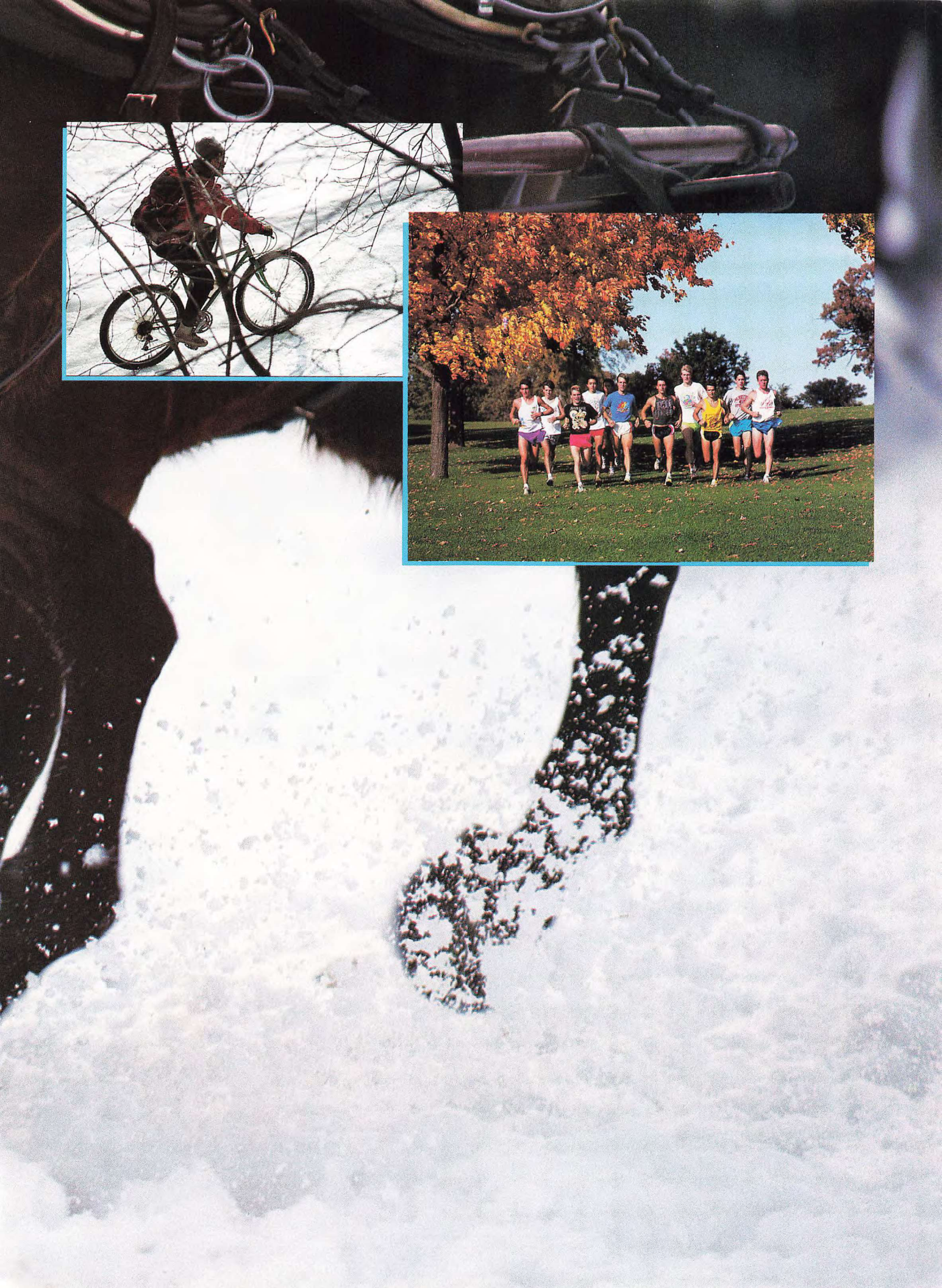
Rumors that Minnesotans are amphibious creatures are only slightly exaggerated. The aquatic entities range from pristine mountain streams (inset, far left) to tranquil lakes (inset, far right) to the mighty Mississippi River, which meanders through Minneapolis and St. Paul. For most of the year, the river is a vital thoroughfare for transporting manufactured products, crops, and people, but all activity goes into hibernation in the dead of winter as ice invades the waterway.

SEASONS TO TASTE

No one feels winter's bite more severely than the farmer, but the sight of a Minnesota meadow in full bloom is enough to make any urbanite entertain thoughts of selling the house and business and heading for the countryside.

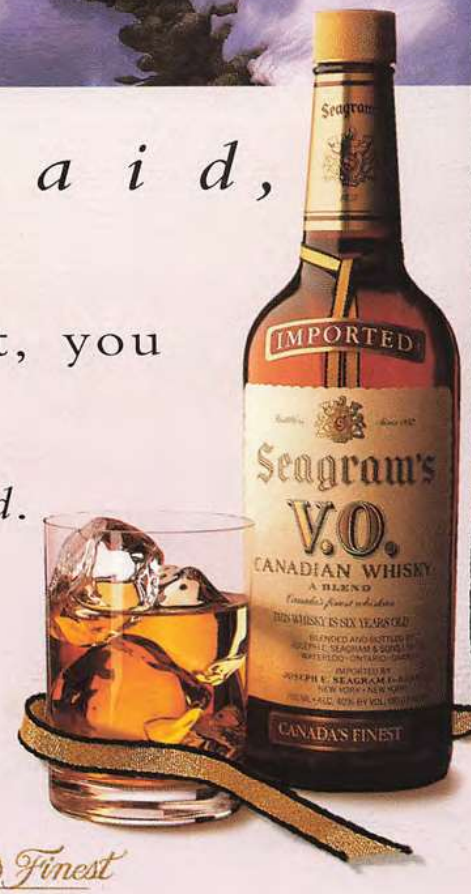


The weather can affect mode of transportation, but it doesn't seem to prevent Minnesotans from getting outside and going mobile. Though the state has thousands of acres of rolling horse country, many of the health-conscious locals feel that two legs—or two wheels—are just as good as four.



Someone once said,

"If you could *bottle* that, you could *sell* it." So we *did*.



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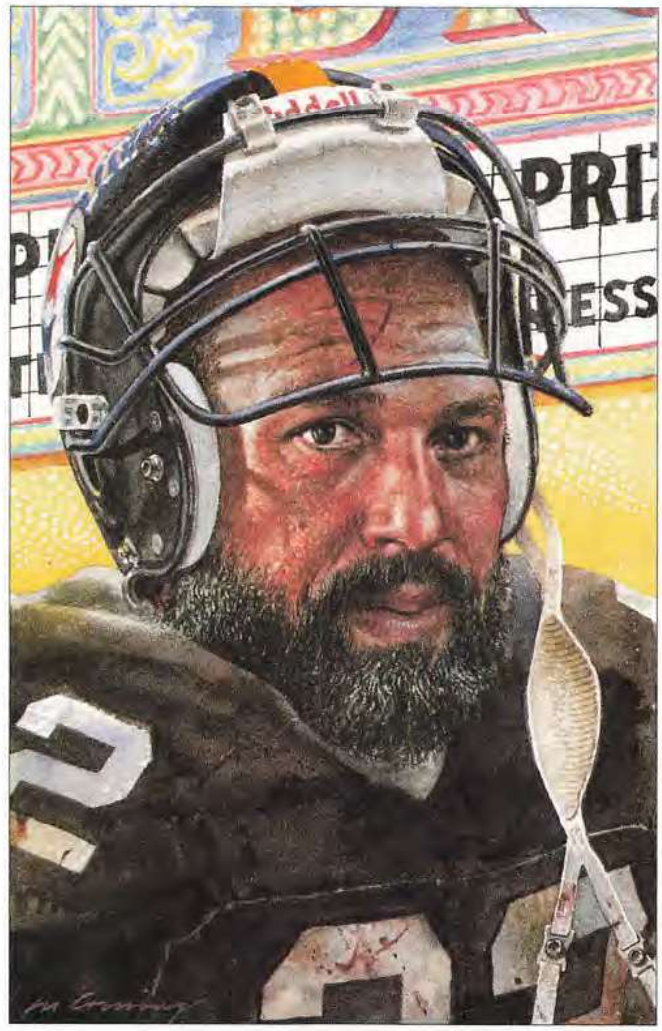
SPOTLIGHT

AUGUST WILSON ON FOOTBALL

HERO WORSHIP ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The Super Bowl has become so much a part of American popular culture that it is difficult to imagine or remember a time before there was a Super Bowl, when the price of a Broadway theater ticket was anywhere from $2 to $10 and you could see your local professional football team for $3.90. A time before cable TV and VCRs and microwave ovens. A time before "Monday Night Football," when all the games were played on Sunday afternoons, and Sunday evenings were dedicated to Ed Sullivan, watched on 19-inch black-and-white televisions. This was before the Beatles, Bob Dylan, or the Supremes. This was years before you could transport an entire football team, its staff, and 200 fans on the same airplane, and long before anyone ever had heard of Bill Gates or Microsoft, back when the letters DOS might have stood for Defensive and Offensive Strategy. It was a time when professional football was played on grassy fields, though with the same skill and intensity with which it is played today.



Merv Corning

In 1959, I was 14 years old and lived in Hazelwood, a working-class area of Pittsburgh made up mostly of steel workers who worked at the Jones and Laughlin steel mill. On Saturdays, they drank beer and cut their lawns, and on Sundays, they took their wives and daughters to church. Their sons, it seemed for the most part, were left to their own devices. The numerous events and sports teams sponsored by the local Knights of Columbus and the Moose and Kiwanis Clubs served better than the church for the molding of their character.

Sports in Hazelwood was a pretty serious proposition, and almost every kid had the opportunity to play for one team or another. These teams were started and sponsored and supported by stout men with large hands and broad backs who sought ways to teach their sons rules of conduct and ideas of fair play, and to instill in them a competitive spirit that would serve them well when they grew up and became lawyers or shoe salesmen or advertising executives. Sports might even lead to college and a job other than the arduous and all-consuming work of making steel.

Sunday afternoon, weather permitting, was given to listening to the Steelers football game on the front porch. In 1959, Steelers football fans were hardy; they had well-developed loyalties despite the fact the team consistently was at the bottom of the standings. There were few victories to celebrate, as guys named Terry Bradshaw, Mean Joe Greene, Jack Lambert, Franco Harris, and Lynn Swann still were in junior high school, and it would be many years before Pittsburgh sportswriters ran out of metaphors to describe the "Steel Curtain" Steelers teams of the seventies.

To a 14-year-old in a world of rapidly shifting values and expectations, sports is a way of discovering and defining yourself, of testing and exploring the limits of potential. A way of being and becoming. It is a world unto itself, and nothing is as important within that world as its Heroes. Every home run by Hank Aaron and every knockout by Sonny Liston became a victory for *you*, an announcement of *your* presence in the world, flush with an exciting armada of possibilities. You lived through your heroes' flesh and sought to reenact their

accomplishments, whether in a pick-up touch game or on the playing field of the local high school or in the world of your imagination.

In the minds of the boys I grew up with, no one loomed larger as a Hero than Jim Brown, who had blazed his way into our consciousness in 1957. Jim Brown was everything we wanted to be. Big, quick, and powerful, he ran right over the linebackers, leaving would-be tacklers scattered like bowling pins. He stood head and shoulders above any other running back playing the game. And he did it all with grace and style. He was, in a word, magnificent. As we were. Or wanted to be. And could be through him. Every 100-yard game, every touchdown was a salute to our possibilities. We named ourselves after him and argued our right to do so.

This year, 1959, also was the year when we, as incoming freshmen, began our sports careers at Gladstone High School. The baton was passed to us to avenge the litany of crushing defeats suffered at the hands of Westinghouse High School, the powerhouse perennial city football champions. We doubted we could beat them, but we took a solemn vow that we would not be beaten 66-0, we being Earl, Jesse, myself, and Ba Bra (pronounced Bay Bra, short for Baby Brother), whose real name was Arthur.

On a crisp, autumn morning (what other kinds of autumn mornings are there?), the four of us rendezvoused at Earl's house to begin an adventure that has stayed with me for 32 years. We were determined to see Jim Brown and the Cleveland Browns play the Pittsburgh Steelers, despite the fact we had all of $2 among the four of us. Familiar with the security at Forbes Field, which we had tested (sometimes successfully) during innumerable Pittsburgh Pirates baseball games, our plan called for an early arrival, long before the ticket-takers and the small army of security, vendors, ushers, and other official personnel took their places. A short walk from Hazelwood, along Second Avenue up the winding road into Oakland, would put us at the foot of the 15-foot wall that surrounded the stadium. Though we never had done it before, we did not for a moment doubt our ability to scale even a 30-foot wall to see the great Jim Brown.

The four of us were friends, comrades, neighbors who lived on the same street, fell in love with the same girls, and learned, each in his own way, the same things. We also were each others nemeses and delighted in our small victories. Earl was the tallest, Jesse the strongest, Ba Bra the fastest, and I was the best all-around athlete. Nobody could hit a baseball farther than me, nobody could throw a football like Ba Bra (a beautiful spiral that was deadly accurate, he was the presage, both in size and temperament, to the gifted Joe Gilliam), nobody could block shots or hook a basketball better than Earl, and nobody could catch a baseball or a football more skillfully than Jesse. We were good kids with a strong sense of community. We cut lawns, washed the neighbors' cars, and made yearly expeditions to a hidden and abandoned apple orchard, learning the location of which was in itself a rite of passage. There we picked bushels of apples that we sold for $3 to get enough money to buy a pair of $7.98 Converse tennis shoes.

Our conversation up the winding road probably was about football, Jim Brown, and the dreaded confrontation with Westinghouse High School, which followed us everywhere like a gathering storm.

At 10 A.M. the security guards were nowhere to be found, and the wall proved difficult, but somehow surmountable. Finding ourselves alone among 35,000 empty seats, we took the best seats in the house and waited for the game to begin. The best seats in the house proved to be too visible and when the security guards went on duty, we eventually were spotted. But Forbes Field was a large place, and we ran and took seats in the third deck until the gates opened and the crowd began to arrive.

It never occurred to us that the game would be sold out, and every time we settled into a seat someone would come to claim it, until ultimately we were forced to watch the game standing up in the aisles, ducking ushers. And watch it we did.

What a magnificent spectacle! It was big and it was beautiful and it was alive. It was number 32, the Great One himself, now carrying for a 6-yard gain, a 12-yard gain, a 3-yard gain, an 8-yard gain. And then, somewhere in the middle of the game, it happened. To the best of my recollection, what happened was this: Jim Brown broke a 73-yard run. On a quick burst up the middle, he ran over a linebacker and shook off two or three would-be tacklers on his way down the sideline, where some brave defensive back risked life and limb to save the touchdown by lunging and grabbing him by his ankles two yards short of the goal line. Now maybe I have embellished this over the years. Often in the retelling of an event, we exaggerate it until we ourselves come to believe it, to the point where we no longer can separate fact from fiction. So I concede beforehand that some football historian, some NFL statistician, some discriminating fan or sportswriter may prove that it was a 43-yard run, or maybe a 37-yard run, but what happened next is indisputable and irrefutable.

Overjoyed, we held our breath and secretly prayed in the name of poetic justice that Jim Brown be given the ball so he could score the touchdown he had so narrowly missed. The dictates of poetic justice prevailed and the handoff went to Brown who, while negotiating the 2 yards into the end zone, did the unspeakable. He fumbled.

We were, to a man, crushed. It is not an easy thing at 14 years old to see your hero falter. Not that we were unaware that fumbles and missteps were part of the game. We had seen Roberto Clemente drop a fly ball, and we had seen Hank Aaron strike out. But somehow this was different. This was bigger. Maybe because no matter how brilliant the run, it was incomplete and needed the two yards to legitimize it. Maybe, and I think this is more accurate, we simply had invested too much of ourselves in Jim Brown's heroics. Whatever it was, our spirits were bruised, and as we began the walk back down the winding road, the fumble stayed with us. It hung in the air, unspoken. We walked in silence and gradually it came to us: The possibility of failure carried with it the possibility of success. If the great Jim Brown could fumble the ball, then maybe just maybe, the great Westinghouse High School football team could stumble on its way to the championship. It was a thought where there had been none before.

"Hey, man, you think Westinghouse take City again this year?"

"I don't know. They ain't so tough. They only beat Carrick by twenty-six points."

"If you don't be scared...Half the time that's how they win, 'cause the other team be scared."

"We got a good defense. All you got to do is stop Henderson. He the one be scoring all their points."

The road opened and our pace quickened. It was, after all, only a game.

"Hey, Earl."

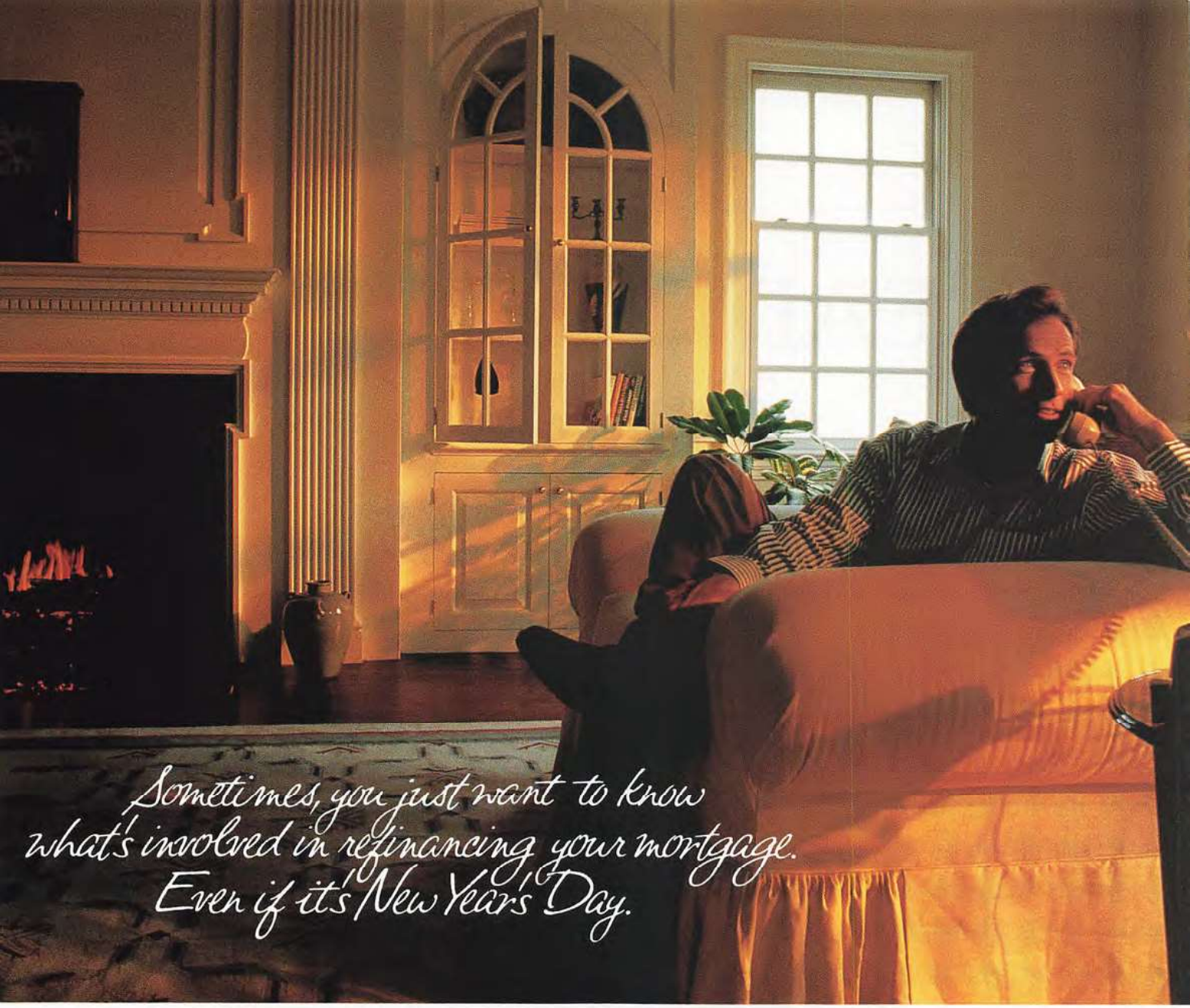
"What?"

"Why you got such a big head, man?"

"Yeah. And look at them feet."

"I don't know how you walk with them size twelves."

We turned onto Second Avenue, the wind at our backs and the road home welcoming us as heaven welcoming a saint. ■



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SPOTLIGHT

READY, WEATHER OR NOT

Neither Snow Nor Rain Nor Anything Else Slowed Vince Lombardi's Packers From Their Appointed Rounds

BY KEVIN LAMB

Rain was pouring down when Packers coach Vince Lombardi went out to the practice field. He looked to the sky. "We've got to practice!" he shouted. "Stop!"

"A couple of seconds later, I swear to God, it stopped," says Willie Davis, who played defensive end for all but the first of Lombardi's Packers teams.

This happened more than once, if not always so dramatically. More often, it was just a big, gray cloud that hustled out of the way when Lombardi arrived for practice. "We used to say, 'It never rains when you play for Lombardi,'" former wide receiver Max McGee says.

"He just didn't allow any bad weather," says Domenic Gentile, the current Packers trainer who was an assistant trainer during Lombardi's years in Green Bay (1959-1967).

What Lombardi didn't do was *acknowledge* bad weather. He had plenty of it through nine seasons in Green Bay and five NFL championships. The "Ice Bowl" NFL Championship Game on December 31, 1967, when it was 13 below with a minus-35 wind chill in Green Bay, was played in the coldest temperature of any NFL game ever. The Packers played and practiced often in the kind of cheek-stinging, nose-crackling, eye-draining conditions that prompted Minneapolis to build the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, which is shielding Super Bowl XXVI from the cold realities of a winter in the snow belt.

There was no domed stadium in Green Bay, so Lombardi constructed a psychological dome. "It's not cold if you don't accept it," former wide receiver Boyd Dowler says. That was Lombardi's credo.

One layer of the dome was the Packers' player shells. Lombardi toughened them by practicing outdoors, whatever the weather. "We learned we could still perform," McGee says.

Another layer was preparation. With heating coils under the field, hot-air blowers on the sideline, and insulating layers for the players, Lombardi made miserable playing

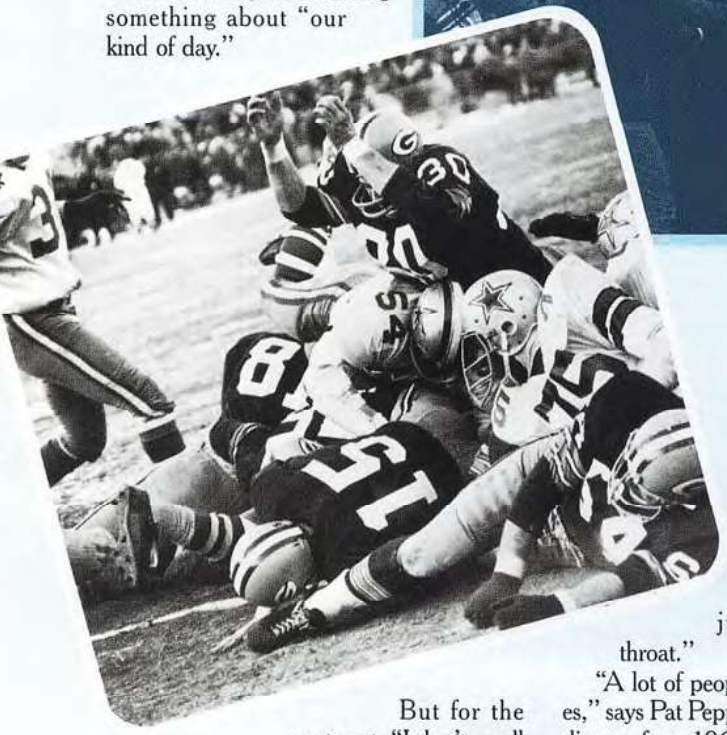
Green Bay head coach Vince Lombardi never allowed weather to be an excuse for not performing. He demanded that the Packers ignore bad weather.

Vernon Biever

conditions as tolerable as possible.

But the thickest layer was attitude: On Lombardi's Packers there were no excuses for losing. Cold didn't matter. Lombardi rarely mentioned it.

Players remember rare occasions when he walked through the locker room before an icy game, reminding them to dress warmly or muttering something about "our kind of day."



John Biever

Malcolm Emmons

Bart Starr (15, left) followed guard Jerry Kramer's (64) block for the winning touchdown with 13 seconds left against Dallas in the 1967 NFL title game (the Ice Bowl), and Green Bay's fans celebrated.

But for the most part, "I don't recall him saying it should be to our advantage," says Dave Hanner, who played and coached the defensive line. "He just said the weather should never be a factor between winning and losing."

Looking back, after stints with five teams as an assistant coach, Dowler says that in preparing for frigid weather Lombardi "did the very best thing you could do—which was make doubly certain you didn't pay attention to it. He didn't recognize it. It wasn't recognized as a problem, so consequently, you had nothing you could offer as an excuse; so you played the way you were supposed to play every day, no matter what. If it was hot or cold or in between, or rainy or muddy or a frozen field, or the wind was blowing or the sun was in your eyes—it simply was a non-issue."

Dowler learned that early in his career. He briefly lost a ball in the sun and couldn't adjust in time to make the catch. "I offered that as an excuse when I came to the sideline," Dowler says. "I never did that again. He jumped right down my throat."

"A lot of people say there are no excuses," says Pat Peppler, Lombardi's personnel director from 1963 on. "But he lived it, and he believed it. So if you had bad weather or anything went bad, he expected the team to rise up and overcome it."

If a key officiating call went against the Packers, Lombardi might have groused about it, but he made sure the players knew the officials didn't cost them the game. If there were unusual throngs of reporters at a Super Bowl, he made it clear that it didn't matter. If the road crowd was noisy, or the players' energy was seeping away in the fourth quarter, same thing. No excuses.

"I've been with other teams that did stupid things about time changes, like have bed-checks at Eastern Standard Time if you went from the East Coast to the West Coast," Dowler says. "You were checking beds and the sun hadn't even gone down. All that does is put in the player's mind there's going to be an advantage for the other team."

Pain was no excuse, either. "It's an inconvenience and all, but you've got to get it done—up to a point," Peppler says. "With his conviction and the force of his personality, he made the players believe it."

McGee came off the field one time with two dislocated fingers. "I showed them to him and he almost threw up," McGee says. "They were sticking in all different directions. I said something like, 'How the hell do you expect me to catch a ball with this hand?' So he said, 'Get 'em fixed.' So the trainer puts them back in, and you're back on again."

If a player's teeth chattered or he mentioned the cold, then Lombardi would shrug his shoulders as if to say, "So? The game's still going on, isn't it?"

"We kind of took bad weather as a challenge," Davis says.

"You didn't fall down, either," Dowler says. "If you'd tell him the field's frozen in practice and you're slipping around, he'd just shrug his shoulders and look at you like, Whatever you have to do to stand up, you stand up. You know how kids will say, 'Well, I slipped'? His answer was, 'Don't slip.' He made it pretty simple."

The players bought it, perhaps because they knew Lombardi didn't offer excuses himself. He blamed himself after losses, and he didn't criticize players publicly. "That had an impact on all of us," Peppler says.

"Vince could convince you it wasn't cold," McGee says. "I think that was our big edge. If Vince said it wasn't cold, then what the hell. Must not be cold. He was that strong mentally."

He made the players mentally stronger, says former linebacker Ray Nitschke. He appealed to their professional pride, to their abil-

ity to tune out everything except the task of playing football. They *could* do that, couldn't they?

"It was no advantage for the Packers to play in the cold weather," Nitschke says. "Most of the guys were from the South. But he just made us mentally tougher to be ready to compete in the cold weather. We practiced in all kinds of weather, and he made us not be concerned about it."

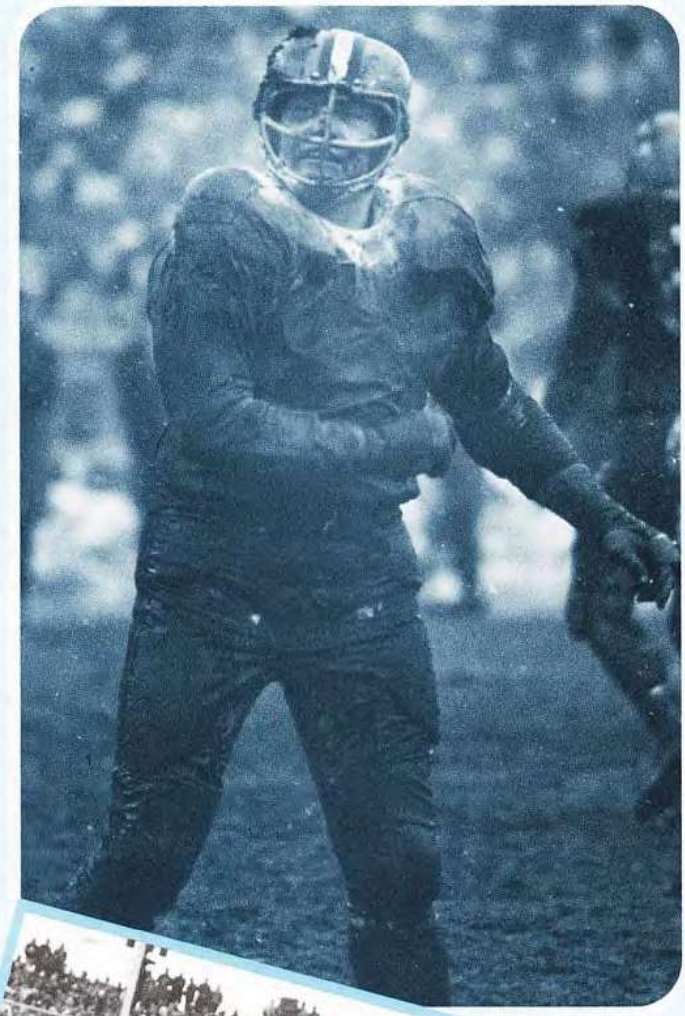
Players laughed at the way Lombardi dressed for cold weather, his eyeglasses and nose peering out from a pile of fur and wool. But Red Cochran, his offensive backfield coach from 1959-1966, says Lombardi "even looked forward once in a while to getting a bad day for practice." It was better to have miserable weekdays interrupted by balmy Sundays than the other way around.

"He made them think it was to their advantage to be out there practicing in the cold because the people coming in wouldn't be able to handle it," says Tom Miller, Lombardi's administrative assistant.

It did help, McGee says. "I never had any trouble catching the ball," he says. "It didn't feel so good sometimes, but for some reason, you always caught it." One of the reasons was fear. Nobody was willing to go back to the sideline and tell Lombardi his hands were too cold.

"You find out you can handle the cold weather, and the mystery is gone," Dowler says. "The ball is a little harder. It's a little slicker, and your hands don't get tacky at all. It is different. You get used to practicing in it, and that's an advantage."

Getting accustomed to cold weather is another issue. Nobody does that, former Packers say. "You just put on more clothes," Hanner says. "You accept it."



Vernon Biever

Vernon Biever

Muddy defensive tackle Dick Modzelewski (top) expressed Cleveland's frustration as Jim Taylor (31) and the Packers rushed for 204 yards in the 1965 NFL Championship Game.

Lombardi didn't believe in lengthy practices, even in decent weather. "One of his pet theories was a football player's attention span was not very long," Cochran says, so Lombardi held practices down to an hour and a half. In bad weather, he cut them back to an hour. Sometimes he'd lengthen practice by doing warm-ups indoors, but he believed that one good hour outside was better than two sloppy hours.

"He gave in to the weather one time," Gentile says. It was a few days after the Ice Bowl, and the Packers' only remaining game was Super Bowl II in Miami.

"We weren't out there ten or twelve minutes, and there was a little white spot down at the lobe of his ear," Gentile says. "I told him, 'You know, I think you're getting some frostbite.' He said, 'What are you talking about?' I said, 'Your ear. Feel your ear.' He said, 'Geez, it feels like it's burning.' I said, 'Yup,' so he screamed for Tom Miller, who was in charge of transportation. 'Let's get out of here. Let's go to Miami.' It was ten below zero here, and ninety-five when we got to Miami, so it was a difference of more than one-hundred degrees."

Bad weather was more a fact of life in Lombardi's era. The only warm cities in the old 14-team NFL prior to 1966 were Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Dallas, and there weren't fancy indoor practice facilities. "I remember the real hot days more than the cold ones," says former safety Tom Brown.

Seasons ended earlier, and the last two games always were in California. Green Bay didn't play a home game in its last two regular-season

weeks until Lombardi's last year.

Not that San Francisco in December was a tourist attraction. "By the time we got to Kezar Stadium, you were lucky if you could find one blade of grass," McGee says. "You were doubly blessed if it hadn't rained recently."

"The worst conditions I ever saw were the day we played at San Francisco in a driving rainstorm in 1960," Cochran says. "There's a classic photo from that day of Forrest Gregg sitting on the bench with mud all over his helmet. Red Hickey was coaching San Francisco, and Red was punting on second and third down just to give us the ball in hopes we'd fumble it on our end of the field."

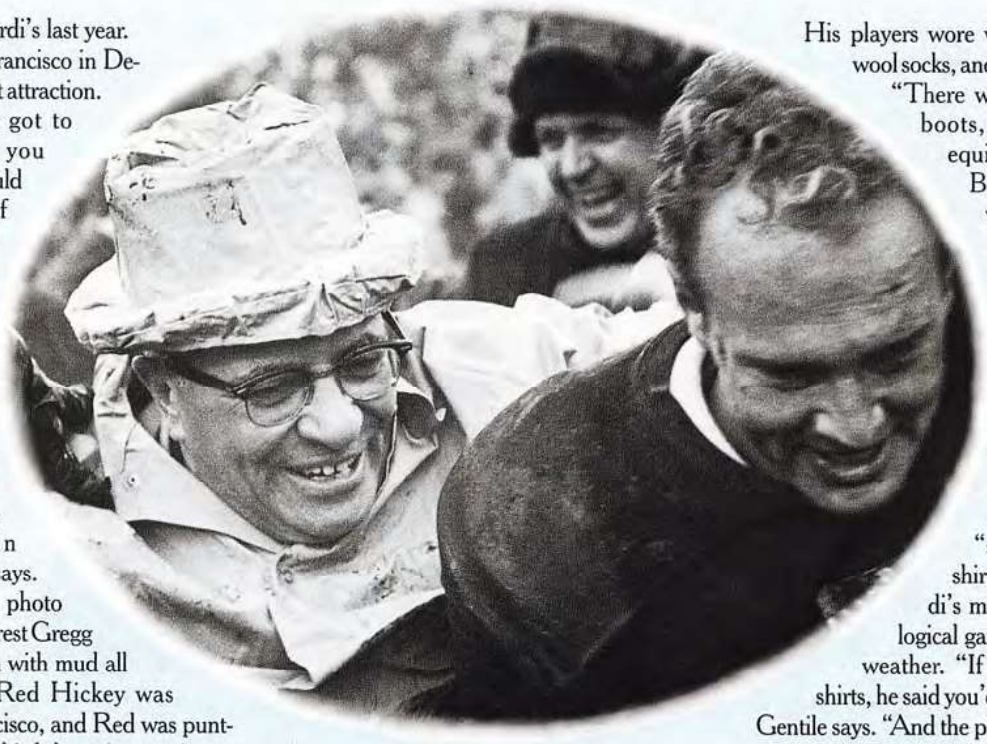
The Packers won 13-0, and Cochran remembers Hornung's breaking free for the late, clinching touchdown. "He took a dive on about the twenty, hit at about the ten and skidded in," Cochran says.

"All of us literally threw away our shoes after that game," Davis says.

"I recall standing in the end zone to punt, and I looked down at my feet," McGee says. "I couldn't see my feet because of all the mud. I said, 'How the hell am I going to kick this damn ball?' But Vince would never have understood that, so I had to kick it anyway."

While Lombardi's teams were only 4-3-1 at San Francisco, they were 7-0 at Minnesota, where many of his players and aides thought they played their coldest regular-season games. Long before the Metrodome was built, Vikings coach Bud Grant forbade Vikings players from using either gloves or sideline heaters. "The Green Bay guys kidded the Vikings' players about it, and I think some of the Vikings probably told them they wished the hell they had the heaters," Peppler says.

Lombardi had no problem with heaters. Miller says he resisted them in Green Bay at first, when the NFL required home teams to provide them for visitors, too. But when the league allowed visiting teams to buy and install their own, the Packers always used them. "One year they even built some shelters on the sideline with plastic," Gentile says, "but they didn't really work out as well as just having the blowers."



Lambeau Field in Green Bay was a muddy swamp, but Paul Hornung (right) ran for 105 yards and Jim Taylor added 96 when Lombardi's Packers dominated Cleveland 23-12 in the 1965 NFL title game.

Gloves were another matter. Linemen could wear them because they had to put their hands on the ground and didn't have to handle the ball. No one else could wear them in practices or games, except in warmups.

Even so, the gloves available then weren't much help. They were like gardening gloves. "Those silly little cotton gloves," Dowler says. "Kind of like putting a pair of socks on your hands. But they were better than [wearing] nothing."

"Now everybody wears gloves," Brown says. "They wear them in August." Modern gloves aren't much thicker than another layer of skin, and they have a tacky surface that replaces the outlawed, gluey 'Stickum' from Lombardi's era.

"Once a football player becomes used to it, it becomes a part of him," Brown says. "If he doesn't have it, psychologically he feels he can't catch the ball. He has to have his gloves. Like batting gloves in baseball."

Lombardi coached before the era of synthetic fibers and snug-fitting insulated clothes. His players wore wool underwear, wool socks, and wool facemasks. "There were no fur-lined boots," says Packers equipment manager Bob Noel, who was the assistant equipment manager under Lombardi. "They wore overshoes."

But the old Packers did have Super Shirts. The "special" undershirts were Lombardi's most overt psychological gambit against cold weather. "If you wore those shirts, he said you'd never get cold," Gentile says. "And the players bought it."

One of the ways Lombardi took players' minds off the weather was to keep the game plans reasonably constant across the thermometer's spectrum. That wasn't terribly difficult. With an offense that featured the running game and play-action passes, former offensive line coach Ray Wietecha says, "We played like it was cold all the time." But Lombardi did make subtle adjustments for weather, especially when the field was frozen or muddy.

"If the weather was bad, he'd remind everybody to stay with a few basic plays we had," Wietecha says. "That way, you don't lose the ball, and that way, you're going straight ahead, with no fancy footwork or going across, running sideways. He wanted us to slant right at something."

Lombardi also positioned his offensive linemen a little farther apart in bad weather. By forcing the opponent to spread out, Hanner says, "the defense would have to react more off the block, and sometimes the back would be there before the defender could get there. He couldn't just stuff you in the hole and make the play."

Frozen fields were the worst of the bad-weather obstacles for most players. A frozen field made it hard to run fast or change directions, and being tackled on one felt like landing "on a parking lot," Dowler says.

So Lombardi solved the frozen-field problem with what the Packers called their "electric blanket," a system of heated coils under the Lambeau Field turf. He bought the

Vernon Biever

READY, WEATHER OR NOT

coils in 1967 for $80,000, from the Chicago Bears' coach's nephew, who also was named George Halas, says Packers public relations director Lee Remmel. "There's still a sign on the wall down there that says, 'Field Electrified,'" Remmel says.

Before he popped for the electric blanket, Lombardi had Wietecha research another alternative, the newly developed artificial turf. Wietecha says he visited the only midwestern college that had the plastic grass and "wrote a little thesis on it." He doesn't know why Lombardi chose the heating coils.

"We didn't even know about AstroTurf being too hard," Wietecha says. "It looked like an inch of grass, and they said they put a mat under it to absorb the shock. Now they put it almost on concrete, but originally they said, 'We've got padding an inch and a half thick, and the grass part's an inch and a half thick, and it's safer than grass, for God's sake.' Then they remodeled the whole thing and got it down to where it's just like a pool table.

"Those poor guys playing on it now have got to be suffering when they reach my age. I'm suffering now just from playing ten years on grass."

Hard surface or soft, the playing field never seemed to matter. Mush was the surface for the 1965 NFL Championship Game, when Green Bay met Cleveland the day after a four-inch snowfall.

"I remember Vince going out before the game that day," Davis says. "He said, 'Aw, the Browns won't like this, but it's our kind of weather.'" He was right. Hall of Fame running back Jim Brown ran for only 50 yards, the Packers ran for 204, and Green Bay won 23-12.

Davis recalls Lombardi saying much the same about the Giants before the 1962 NFL Championship Game in New York. It was 20 degrees in Yankee Stadium that December 30, but the wind was 35 miles an hour, and McGee, Gentile, Noel, and Miller say they were more uncomfortable there than at the Ice Bowl five years later. McGee says his brother tried to drive to the game from Long Island but didn't make it because a gust of wind blew his car into the guard rail of a bridge.

"It was so windy, when the guys went into the game and took off their capes, the capes floated like a magic carpet," Noel says.

Green Bay's fans were as hardy as their beloved team. There were 50,861 on hand when the Packers beat the Cowboys in the Ice Bowl. The temperature was 13 below zero, with 15 mile-an-hour winds.

"When we got up off the benches at halftime, the benches followed us halfway into the dressing room," McGee says. Before he returned from the unheated dressing room, McGee says he offered Lombardi his share of the championship pot if he didn't have to go back outside for the second half. "He kind of laughed, but I was serious," McGee says, laughing.

Jerry Kramer kicked field goals from 26, 29, and 30 yards in the 16-7 victory, even though he told Noel he had to aim for the corner of the end zone to reach the middle. McGee was less fortunate punting. "I never had one blocked in my life," he says, "but they got one that day [for the Giants' only touchdown]. The wind was blowing so hard, you couldn't just drop it on your foot. You kind of had to throw it at your foot."

The Packers had propane heaters on the sideline but couldn't use them because the wind kept blowing them over. As Noel recalls, the Giants tried to warm themselves by burning charcoal in three 50-gallon drums. The problem was, they lit the fires in the morning before the wind shifted, and Noel says, "They ate charcoal smoke the whole game."

Wietecha, the Giants' center that day, doesn't remember it quite the same way. That's how a lot of teams kept warm in the early sixties. "You'd take a barrel and somebody would throw some stuff in it and burn it," he says. "But if smoke was blowing at you, you'd just move away from it."

Packers fullback Jim Taylor tied a championship game record with 31 carries and gained 85 yards. "He took a beating," Nitschke says. "Guys were all over him. That's probably the most brutal, physical game that I witnessed or played in. We had beaten the Giants 37-0 in Green Bay the year before, and they were mad. When Y.A. Tittle [the New York quarterback] couldn't throw in the wind, it became a real physical game."

For most Packers, the Ice Bowl against Dallas wins the golden icicle award for miserable conditions. It ended memorably with Packers quarterback Bart Starr following Kramer's block over right guard for the 1-yard touchdown that won the game 21-17...and the sight of Packers fans' breath billowing from slits in their ski masks froze an unforgettable image of Green Bay into the national consciousness.

"People away from Green Bay tended to think you played every game in those conditions," Peppler says. "They said, 'I guess you're used to it.' I said, '*Nobody* stands outside in that kind of weather.'"

Emmons & Brockway

Davis calls that game probably the first challenge "to Lombardi's notion that it was our kind of weather. We said, 'Yeah, coach, but this is not even the Green Bay Packers' kind of weather.'"

It had been Packers weather the week before, when they beat the Rams in Milwaukee. "About twenty degrees and the sun was out," Hanner says. "It was a nice day to us." Even the Saturday before the Ice Bowl was about the same.

But the temperature started tumbling overnight. Gentile says much of the night was invested in shoe design—trying to improve traction for the conditions. "They didn't have those shoes they have now with the real small multiple cleats," Gentile says. "So they took coaches' shoes with the rippled soles, and had people cutting notches in them."

The electric blanket failed to keep the field from freezing, but Miller says it wasn't because the coils froze, as the lore has it. The switch was turned on too late, and the thawing process softened the field too much. "We were afraid somebody would jam something into the field and the electric current would get them," Miller says. "It worked fine. We could get that thing up to sixty-five degrees."

The weather inspired Noel to try an equipment innovation that he still uses. He didn't want to be restringing shoulder pads at 13 below, so he says, "I knotted every one every time it went through an eye loop. If the string broke, it slipped back as far as that one eye loop."

For the sidelines, the Packers made dugouts for both teams out of steel pipe and canvas. Each team had three propane heaters that kept the areas fairly warm. The problem was, the players had to leave the warmth to play ball.

"We probably came closer to standing around and letting the weather be a factor in that game than in any game I can remember," Davis says. "I remember guys shivering on the sideline in a way that there was just no way they had the aggressive attitude that would have been there in ideal weather. You were thinking how cold you were first. Probably the one thing that weighed on your mind was every time you fell down on that frozen turf, having been wet, it was very abrasive, and you'd get these burns that would sting unlike anything else."

The Cowboys could have thought of better things to do on that day, too. "They had a wide receiver named Bob Hayes who spent the whole day playing with his hands inside his pants unless he was the primary receiver,"

In nine years as Packers coach, Lombardi won five NFL championships and two Super Bowls. His career record (counting a year in Washington) was 105-35-6 for a remarkable .740 winning percentage.

McGee says. "We picked that up pretty quick." But Dan Reeves, then the Cowboys' halfback and now Denver's coach, threw a 50-yard touchdown pass to Lance Rentzel for a 17-14 lead in the fourth quarter.

The Packers had to drive 69 yards in the last 4:50 to win it. They reached the Cowboys' 1 in 11 plays, many of them short passes in front of Cowboys linebackers who had trouble maneuvering without ice skates. On third down, Starr called Green Bay's last time out.

An option rollout would have given Starr a chance to score or throw the ball away with time enough for a field goal, but, as Peppler says, "That play was something we weren't real big on." A short field goal on third down would have tied the game, but Lombardi later said he didn't want to make the players and fans stay outside any longer for overtime.

"If that game would have lasted another five to ten minutes, I think there could have been a lot more fans and players seriously injured," Hanner says. "The wind had gotten worse. Most people were prepared for the cold, but when it gets down below zero and a chill factor of forty or fifty below, you don't prepare for it. You just get out of it."

So Starr and Lombardi talked about how to get out of it with a victory. They stood alone, but Wietecha was nearby.

"They were talking in generalities," Wietecha says. "We were going to run it, but what play? That was the crux of it during the time out. It was just talk, quiet, talk, mentioning a play here or there. Who do you want to go at on that Dallas defense? Those two guys were just exchanging things. They were taking it easy, calm. They mentioned a couple of things, and the whistle blew, and Bart turned around and ran in."

Lombardi started pacing toward Peppler, who asked him what the play was. "Vince said, 'I'll be damned if I know,'" Peppler says. "And Bart ran a sneak that wasn't even in our offense."

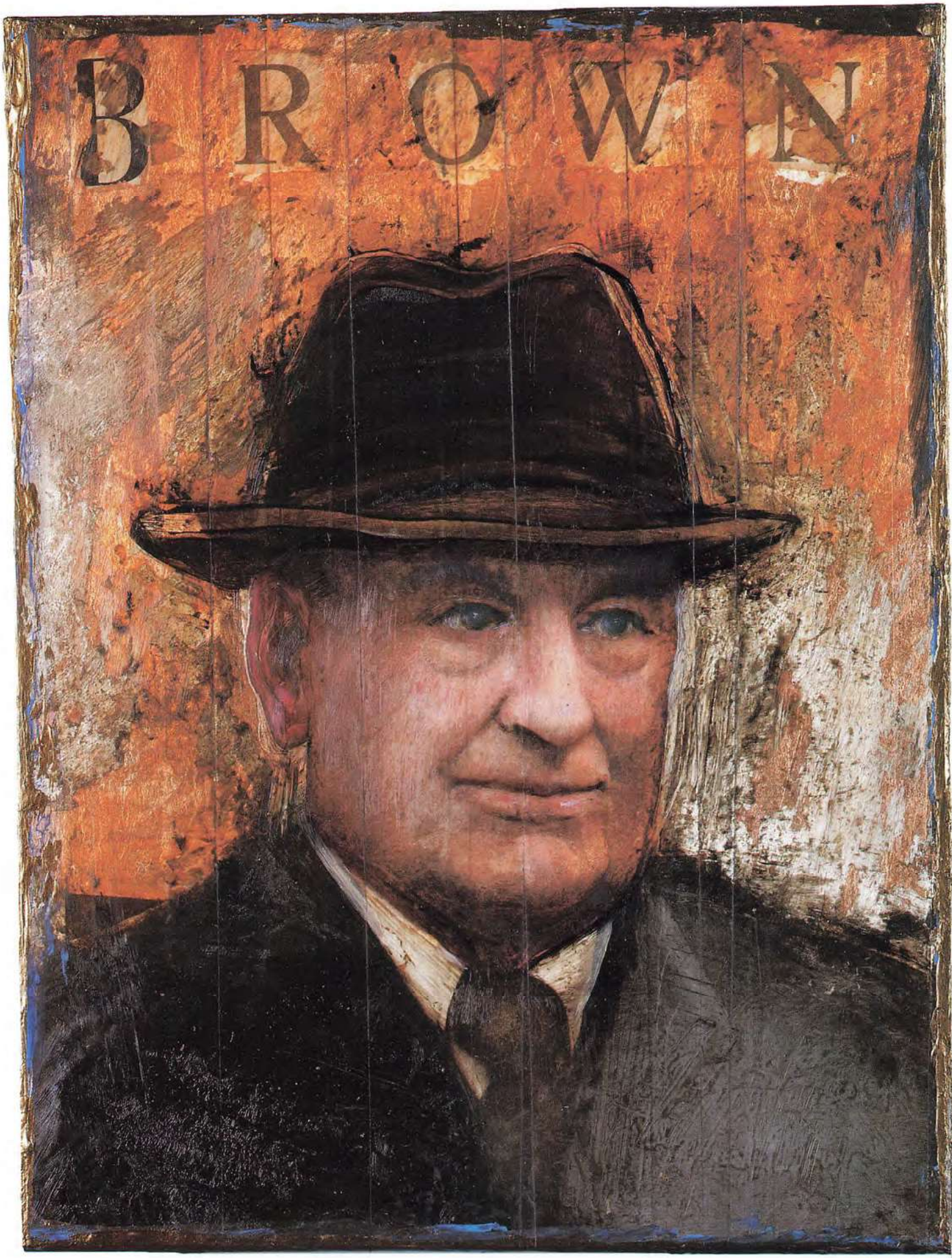
It wasn't really even a quarterback sneak. The play Starr called in the huddle was "31," Wietecha says, a handoff to fullback Chuck Mercein. The blocking at the line was for the fullback run. But halfback Donny Anderson had struggled on the frozen turf just to reach the line of scrimmage on the previous two plays, so Starr didn't hand off. He scored with 13 seconds to go, following Kramer's block of Jethro Pugh. "Which was one of his better decisions," Peppler says.

Nitschke didn't notice until about two hours later that his toes were frostbitten. He was the only Packer with frostbite. "To this day, when I go out, I have to make sure my feet are warm," he says. But that Sunday afternoon, celebrating a third straight NFL championship, he says he didn't even think about his feet.

"To me, I never was cold out there playing in a game," Nitschke says. "When you're in a game and somebody's trying to knock you off, you're concerned about playing the game. You're not concerned about weather.

"That was the whole Lombardi thing. You can't let the weather bother you. You let it bother you, the game's over and you lost and you're looking back, saying, 'Why didn't I mentally get into this thing?' Football's an emotional game. You've got to get yourself keyed up. You can't be concerned about the weather. You've got to be concerned about your opposition. That's what's going to beat you. The weather's not going to beat you. That's the thing he made sure you kept in your mind." ■

Nate Fine


BROWN

SPOTLIGHT

P.B.

A Remembrance of Paul Brown —Coach, Teacher, Human Being

BY RAY DIDINGER

Illustrations: Greg Spalenka

Paul Brown seemed to vanish almost immediately after his team, the Cincinnati Bengals, arrived in Michigan for Super Bowl XVI.

Cincinnati's coaches and players were available to the media each morning that week, but Brown, the team's founder and patriarch, was nowhere to be seen.

He wasn't in the team's hotel headquarters. He wasn't in his suite. His secretary told reporters that Brown was in meetings. It was all very frustrating.

On Thursday before the game, NFL executive Don Weiss asked Brown to grant at least one press conference. Brown agreed, but he stipulated it be kept quiet and limited to a handful of reporters.

As usual, P.B. got his way.

So at noon, after the great media horde had departed, eight writers were escorted down a long, winding hallway to the South Wing of the Troy Hilton Hotel.

Waiting there in a makeshift meeting room, seated next to a film projector, was Paul Brown, vice president and general manager of the Bengals, former head coach of the Cleveland Browns. Pro Football Hall of Fame member. Legend. Brown was dressed neatly—brown suit, white shirt, and tie. He folded his hands and waited while the newsmen opened their notepads. He crossed his legs and tapped his foot in the air. Swiftly. Nervously. It was obvious he wasn't thrilled with this arrangement.

"Why were you so reluctant to meet with the press this week?" someone asked.

"I just feel all this attention should be going to our coaches and players," Brown said. "They're the ones who have done the work. They're the ones who brought us here. They should get the accolades.

"I'm not cut off from the team, you understand. I've been around all week. I've been to our practices. But the interviews, the pictures...I'll leave that to Forrest [Gregg, then head coach] and the players."

"But are you enjoying this week?" another reporter asked. "Oh, yes," Brown replied.

"These are exciting days for the O.C."

Heads shot up. Brown smiled.

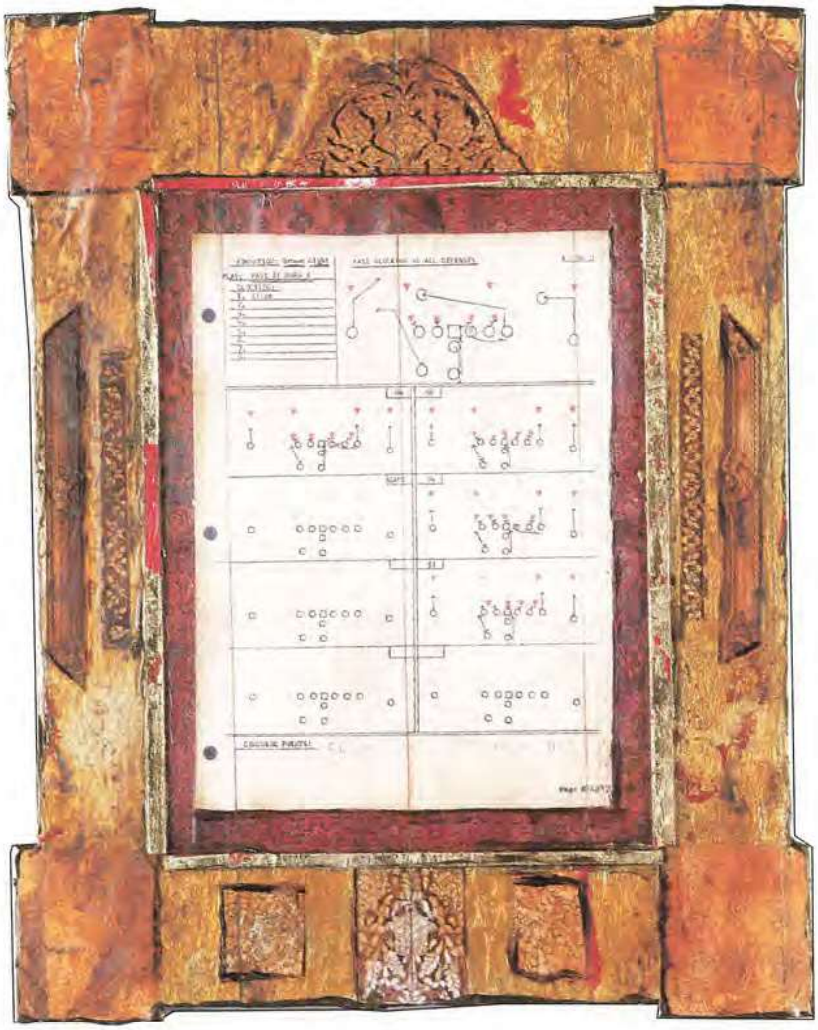
"O.C. stands for Old Coach," he said.

Anyone who ever met Paul Brown has a favorite memory of the man. That's mine: sitting in a Michigan hotel room 10 years ago, watching him slowly warm to the discussion of his life and times in pro football. Brown talked for an hour that day, tracing his coaching roots back to Massillon (Ohio) High School, winding through 17 seasons with the Browns and finally to the American Football Conference championship in Cincinnati. It was a fascinating journey, full of insight and wit.

I replayed that conversation in my mind last August when I learned that Brown had died at 82 from complications of pneumonia.

Other people who knew Brown as a coach, a friend, or a football rival had their own memories which, when pieced together, form the portrait of a unique individual, a man who put the word "modern" in the modern era of pro football. Teacher. Innovator. Taskmaster. Brown was all those things, certainly. He could be stern and stubborn in the extreme. But he also was a loyal and caring man who enjoyed a good joke, an afternoon of gin rummy, and a quiet Scotch with a former player.

What follows is a profile of this complex man as seen by those who walked the fields with him, from Massillon High School to the Super Bowl.



"I always felt that before Paul Brown came along, football coaches just rolled the ball onto the practice field and blew the whistle," says Sid Gillman, who, like Brown, made the Pro Football Hall of Fame for his many coaching innovations.

"Paul was the first one to bring a system to pro football. He brought a practice routine. He broke down practice into individual areas. He had position coaches and they worked the year round. They weren't part-timers like they were on other teams.

"Paul was the first true organizational genius of football. His approach was that of a college professor. He didn't coach the game, he taught it in a classroom with films and blackboards and meticulous notebooks. He was a stickler for details that other coaches would shrug off.

"Paul and I attended quite a few coaching clinics in Ohio in the forties. Paul was a frequent lecturer and his impact was tremendous, even in ways that were rather comical.

"For example, Paul pronounced football as 'fuhball.' He left out the 'T.' During those years, I would often hear other coaches talking about 'fuhball.' They would be imitating Paul right down to the way he spoke.

"If Paul said it was 'fuhball,' then, by golly, it was 'fuhball.'"

"I coached with Paul at Great Lakes [Naval Training Center] during the war, then he hired me as his backfield coach with the Browns," says Weeb Ewbank, who later directed the Baltimore Colts and New York Jets to a total of three league championships.

"I learned a lot working with him. What Paul proved, more than anything else, was that organization and preparation win football games. If you don't prepare, it doesn't matter how good your pregame talk is, you're still gonna lose. Paul wasn't much for pep talks, but he was hell on preparation.

"When Paul drew up each week's game plan, the first paragraph would be the breakdown on how we would attack and defeat this team. It was all there in a nutshell, and it was the first thing every player saw when he opened his folder that week. The guys read it over and over until it sank in."

"Pro football was really a ragged, thrown-together game until Paul came along," says Mike McCormack, who developed into a Hall of Fame tackle under Brown in Cleveland (1954-1962), then served as head coach in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Seattle.

"I remember George Halas once saying that Paul's greatest contribution to football was that he made the other coaches compete with him. He made them all better.

"When I first signed with the New York Yankees [in 1951], we had little copy books with a play drawn here and a play drawn there. It was like high school football. We had two assistant coaches; one was a part-time card dealer in Reno, the other one was a salesman for a soda company.

"When I joined the Browns [1954], I couldn't believe how thorough everything was. Paul would lecture and we would take notes on everything from how to do calisthenics to how to make the double-team block.

"There were times when I would think, 'Is all this really necessary?' But then I'd look to my right and see Lou Groza writing down every word and Lou already had been in the system for ten years. There was a very specific way of doing things with the Browns. If you didn't grasp that, you didn't last."

"I remember the 1950 championship game very well," Paul Brown said that day 10 years ago, in a hotel room in Michigan. "It was a game much like this Super Bowl, a game with a lot of meaning for me, personally.

"We had just come into the NFL that year, of course, and we were playing the Los Angeles Rams. The Rams had just moved from Cleveland to the West Coast a few years before, so the feeling between the teams was very intense.

"It was a very evenly played game—a lot of offense on both sides. What I remember was the finish. And I remember it for a reason you'd probably never imagine.

"We were losing [28-27], but we had driven the ball down the field and we were lining up for a final field-goal attempt. It was a pretty short kick [16 yards] but it was by no means a sure thing in those cold and windy conditions. We had missed an extra point earlier.

"All the players on our sideline were celebrating and we were still behind. I let them know how I felt. They settled down and watched what was happening on the field with a bit more interest.

"Lou Groza made the kick and we were the NFL champions. It was probably the most exciting game I've ever been involved in."

"I remember that game, too," says Otto Graham, who quarterbacked Cleveland for 10 seasons and is one of a dozen former Brown disciples in the Hall of Fame. "That was the game when I first saw the other side of Paul's personality, the soft side.

"Paul could be very cold and cutting if you made a mistake. He wouldn't shout but he would cut you in half with a look or a remark. You'd want to go hide some place.

"This time, I was running with the ball late in the game and I fumbled it away. I thought I had cost us the championship. It was the lowest moment of my life. Honestly, I was more devastated at that moment than I was a few years ago when the doctor told me I had cancer.

"I came off the field and there was Paul. I thought, 'Uh-oh, here it comes.' But he patted me on the back and said, 'Don't worry, Otts. We'll still get 'em.' That was like a shot of adrenaline. Boy, I couldn't wait to get back out there. Sure enough, we got the ball back and drove down the field to win the game.

"People praised me for my poise and leadership in that game, but if it wasn't for Paul giving me that pat on the back, I couldn't have done it. He knew exactly what I needed in that situation and he gave it to me. Paul knew football, but he knew people as well."

"Paul was tough, but he was fair and, as players, we respected that," says Dante Lavelli, the pass catcher who starred for Brown's 1942 national championship team at Ohio State, then joined him in Cleveland for 10 seasons.

"Two nights before we played the Yankees for the [All-America Football Conference] championship in 1946, our captain, Jim Daniell, was arrested for drunk driving. I heard the news while riding to practice the next morning with Lou Groza. We both knew that was it, Daniell was as good as gone.

"Paul walked into the meeting that day and the first thing he said was, 'Jim, is it true what I read in the paper?' Jim said yes. Paul said, 'Turn in your uniform.' Jim said, 'Do you want to hear my side of the story?' Paul said, 'No.' That was Paul's way. You played by his rules or you didn't play.

"Can you imagine a coach today cutting the team captain two days before the Super Bowl? But Paul's feeling was if a player was out until two in the morning two days before a championship game, then [the game] couldn't mean that much to him. We understood that.

"I don't think anyone on the team was surprised when Paul let Daniell go. We would have been surprised if he hadn't."

"Paul Brown and Vince Lombardi were very different personalities," says Willie Davis, the Hall of Fame defensive end who played for Brown in 1958 and 1959 before joining Lombardi in Green Bay for 10 seasons.

"Both men were tough on the practice field, but Vince was more vocal. He'd jump all over you. Paul was quieter, but when he said something [critical], it was so cold and nasty it cut your heart out.

"I remember my rookie year, Paul came up to me once and said, 'It's obvious this team has scouted you and they are picking on you. I just want you to know that.' The man cut me lower than grass and I couldn't understand it because the plays were actually breaking inside me. I wasn't the one getting beat.

"The next day, we were looking at the films and Paul said, 'Willie, I owe you an apology.' He didn't elaborate, but I knew what he meant and I appreciated it. The man was very honest. I respected that.

"Several years after he traded me [to Green Bay], Paul looked me up after one of our games in Cleveland. He said, 'Willie, I just want you to know we made a big mistake letting you go.' Then he said, 'But I'm happy for you. Keep up the good work.' Coming from Paul, that meant a lot."

'Paul was like an army general, he had a presence about him that was unique. He affected you in ways that went well beyond football. He taught you valuable lessons about life....'

—DON SHULA

"I got to know Paul much better in later years, long after I played for him," says Miami's Don Shula, the second-winningest head coach in NFL history, who began his pro career as a defensive back with the Browns in 1951.

"When we were both in the coaching end of it and serving on various league committees, we developed a social relationship that was a lot of fun. We'd go out to dinner with our wives, we'd play golf. That's when I saw the other side of Paul. He was a witty guy who loved telling stories and laughing.

"But on the field, he was all business, and as a player, I found him to be very intimidating. He was a legend in my eyes. He kept a distance [from the players], which I understand now that I'm a coach myself. He needed to take the broadest possible view of things and he had to be objective. I'm the same way now.

"Paul had a knack of addressing the squad in generalities, yet making each player feel as if [Brown] was talking directly to him. There would be times when he was talking about missed assignments and mental lapses and I'd think, 'Uh-oh, that's me.' Then the guy next to me would duck his head and say, 'That's me, I know it.'

"Paul was like an army general, he had a presence about him that was unique. He affected you in ways that went well beyond football. He taught you valuable lessons about life and responsibility."

"I remember when I acquired the Cincinnati franchise," Paul Brown said. "I had a friend ask me, 'Paul, why are you doing this? Why are you taking over an expansion team? You'll get killed every week. You'll tarnish your reputation.'

"I said, 'You don't understand. It's pro football. I'm not getting into this for the glory or the money. I love the game.

"It's a great game. I can't get it out of my system."

"If I learned anything from Paul, it was the philosophy of how to operate a winning franchise," says Bill Walsh, who was an assistant coach under Brown in Cincinnati [1968-1975] before leading the San Francisco 49ers to three Super Bowl titles in the 1980s.

"With Paul, everything besides winning was cosmetic. It didn't matter. He didn't concern himself with which person had what title and who had the nicest office. To Paul, all those trappings were beyond insignificant. They were a detriment. All that mattered was winning on Sunday.

"Speaking as an assistant coach, Paul was great to work with because once he gained confidence in you, he gave you a free hand. He was always the ultimate authority as head coach and general manager, but he would discuss what you were doing and if he liked it, he would say, 'Fine, go ahead.'

"There was little sentimentality in the way Paul dealt with players and the outside world in general. He had very little use for the press. He didn't care that it created the image of a cold, unfeeling person. He was cold when he felt he needed to be cold, and that was in operating his football team.

"With his friends, away from the office, he was a different person. If that side didn't come out [in the press], he didn't care. He didn't want that side of his personality on public display."

"Paul was a determined and single-minded individual when it came to football," says Chuck Noll who played guard and linebacker for the Browns (1953-59) and later coached the Pittsburgh Steelers to four Super Bowl victories.

"He didn't see it as a jolly, fun time. He took it as a job and he was very serious. Personally, I found him easy to play for. If you were prepared and you played hard, you usually didn't have too many problems.

"The year after Otto [Graham] retired, we went from league champions to 5-7. That was the only losing season Paul ever had in Cleveland, and he was miserable. After the last game, when everyone was getting ready to leave, I remember Paul saying, 'Have a merry Christmas...if you can.'

"I listened to Paul's football philosophy for so long that I simply took it on as my own. Now that I'm a coach, I hear myself mouthing the same things Paul said about football being a game of mistakes and preparation being the key to success.

"I also picked up a few things from Paul that got me in trouble. When I talked about the 'criminal element' in football...I heard Paul say that originally. He was just smarter than me. He never said it around the press."

"I thought the funniest thing about Paul was his paranoia," says Len Dawson, who was a backup quarterback with the Browns (1960-61) before establishing himself as a Hall of Fame player in the American Football League with the Dallas Texans and Kansas City Chiefs.

"When we were on the road, Paul would insist we take our notebooks and game plans everywhere we went. He thought if we left them in our rooms, a maid or a bellhop would pick them up and sell them to the other team.

"When we practiced, Paul was always looking around for spies. One time Paul saw this guy in a parked car near the field. He was there for forty-five minutes, never moved. Paul was convinced the guy was spying, so he sent our equipment manager, Morrie Kono, over to check him out. Turns out it was some poor guy sleeping off a drunk.

"I laughed to myself. I thought, 'Who needs to spy on our practices? All we ever do is run Jim Brown right and run Jim Brown left.'

"But I'll always be grateful to Paul because he gave me a chance to play, not in Cleveland but in the AFL. I was stuck behind Milt [Plum] and I knew Paul wasn't about to change quarterbacks. I needed to find out if I could play pro football and I saw the AFL as an opportunity.

"I went to Paul and asked him to release me so I could sign with the other league. He could have said, 'Forget it, you're under contract here,' but he didn't. He said he understood and he let me go. When I hear people talk about how cold Paul was, I tell that story. A really cold person wouldn't have done what Paul did for me."

'I listened to Paul's football philosophy for so long that I simply took it on as my own. Now that I'm a coach, I hear myself mouthing the same things Paul said....'

—CHUCK NOLL

"When I think of Paul Brown, I think of a man who believed in doing things the right way, not cutting corners," says Stan Walters, an offensive tackle with the Cincinnati Bengals from 1972 to 1974.

"One morning in the dining hall at training camp, they're serving bacon and eggs. There's some bacon sitting there, left over from the day before. The cook starts to put it on my plate and right away, Paul is there.

"He says, 'What's that?' I say, 'That's okay, coach. I don't mind yesterday's bacon.' Paul says, 'I'm paying for fresh bacon.' He stared a hole through the poor cook. We had fresh bacon every morning after that.

"That was Paul. I found him up-front about everything. I was a ninth-round draft pick and I didn't have an agent when I signed. First six games, I was on the cab squad making five-hundred dollars a week. The last eight games I played and made ninth-round money.

"The next year, I came to camp and won a starting job, but I was still working under my old contract. I figured Paul was getting me cheap, but I didn't say anything. I didn't want to cause any trouble.

"The Friday before the opener, Paul called me into his office. He said, 'You're a starter now so we're giving you the same salary we're giving Tommy Casanova and Sherman White.' They were the [Bengals'] top two draft picks that year. My jaw dropped. Paul said, 'You've earned it.'

"You'd go through a wall for someone like that."

"I never thought much about my public image," Paul Brown said. "I know most people based their impressions on what they saw on the sidelines, so they only saw my serious side. I'm not like that all the time. My friends know that.

"Most of that [image] business is silliness anyway. One year in Cleveland, I wore the same brown suit to every game. We kept winning and the players insisted I keep wearing it for good luck. When it got cold, I wore the same overcoat.

"When the season was over, a magazine named me one of the ten best-

dressed men in America. It is all so superficial, how can anyone take that sort of thing seriously?"

"Paul wasn't the easiest man to talk to or to get to know when you were a player," says Jim Brown, the Hall of Fame fullback who led the NFL in rushing eight of the nine seasons he played for the Browns (1957-1965). Brown now heads a coalition of minority youth groups in the greater Los Angeles area.

"I was more outspoken than other players and I fought with Paul over changes that I thought should be made in our offense. I thought we should diversify our attack, pass more on first down, that sort of thing. Teams were keying on me all the time.

"Other [players] felt the same way I did, but they wouldn't say anything to Paul. I would, but it didn't make much difference. Paul had his own way of doing things and he was reluctant to change, because his way had always been successful.

"I'm able to understand that a lot better now that I'm older and I'm in charge of my own organization. It's lonely at the top, and you have to take a broad view of things. You can't waste time changing what already works. Really, I've used a lot of Paul's ideas in putting this movement together. Organization, maximizing the potential of each individual, focusing on essentials and not trivia.

"I always respected Paul and I was grateful for the opportunity he gave me to showcase my talents. Even when we disagreed, we disagreed respectfully."

"Jim and Paul had a tug-of-war about the offense, we all knew that," Willie Davis says. "But they knew each other well enough not to have it out in front of the squad. Neither one would've backed down and it would've been a mess.So they went back and forth in subtle ways.

"Paul sent in all the plays, of course, and when Jim didn't like the call, he'd start growling and muttering things under his breath. It was kind of funny, really. Jim would make suggestions and Paul would usually go along with him, but not right away because then it would look like Jim was calling the shots. He would wait one series, maybe two.

"One time I was playing [offensive] tackle and Jim said, 'Tell Paul to call Thirty-eight Flip.' That was a pitch to Jim going around end. I went to the bench and said, 'Coach, Jim wants to run Thirty-eight Flip.' Paul glared at me and said, 'I'm calling the plays here.' Then he called a dive up the middle.

"The next series, Paul sent in Thirty-eight Flip and Jim went sixty-five yards for a touchdown. Paul looked at me and said, 'You see, the play will work when we want it to work.'"

"I had problems with the whole system when I played, and Paul Brown was part of that," says Mike Reid, a Pro Bowl defensive tackle with the Bengals who quit the NFL to pursue a music career in 1975. He now is a Grammy-award winning songwriter in Nashville.

"I enjoyed playing the games, but I felt as if I was suffocating with all the rules. Curfews, dress codes, team meals. It was the seventies and I was very much into myself and my freedom. I hadn't had my Copernican revelation yet. I still thought the world revolved around me.

"I saw Paul as very cold, treating players as if they were chess pieces. I had very little contact with him. I never got the feeling that he cared to know me as a person. I played seven years in Cincinnati until, finally, I was emotionally burned out. I knew it was time to do something else with my life.

"I went to see Paul to tell him I was retiring. He wasn't surprised. He knew I was unhappy. I thought he would try to talk me out of it, but he didn't. Instead, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'If things don't work out [in music], I just want you to know you'll always have a place here.'

"At that moment, I saw a side of Paul Brown that I'd never seen before and I wished I had.

"Years later, I performed at a dinner for the College Football Hall of Fame, and Paul attended. I dedicated a song to him and he told me later how touched he was. I could see that he had mellowed and by then, so had I."

Paul Brown asked how many people were expected to watch Super Bowl XVI on TV. One-hundred million, he was told.

"That's a lot," he said. Everyone in the room agreed.

"Television has had the greatest impact on pro football, more than anything else over the years," Brown said. "Television is what made the game. Television sold it.

"When the Browns joined the NFL in 1950, I went to Cleveland Gas and Electric Company and tried to sell them our exclusive TV rights for five-thousand dollars. They said that seemed high. I had to convince them.

"They gave me the money, but it was more to humor me than anything else. Things have really changed. You can't even buy a ten-second commercial for five-thousand dollars today. It's really a different game."

"Paul Brown wanted people to think he was a big, bad dragon, but he was really a cream puff," says Jim Houston, a Cleveland linebacker from 1960-1972... Jim's older brother Lin also played for Brown at Massillon High, Ohio State, and the Browns.

"I never saw Paul as just a head coach. He always seemed greater than that to me. I grew up around his teams. My brother used to bring me to practice and I'd be star-struck watching Otto Graham, Marion Motley, Lou Groza, people like that.

"The longer I was around Paul, the more I understood why he won. He had very solid values and he stuck to them. He didn't cater to me because of my brother. He was straight down the middle with everyone. In meetings, in practice, it was all business.

"But I heard stories through my brother about things Paul did for his former players who needed a favor or needed some help. Paul was right there. He talked about '*my* guys' and he really meant it."

'The longer I was around Paul, the more I understood why he won. He had very solid values and he stuck to them....He was straight down the middle with everyone.'

—JIM HOUSTON

"I was still an immature youngster when I joined the Browns in 1958," says Bobby Mitchell, a Hall of Fame running back. "Paul taught me how to walk, talk, and eat before he ever taught me how to play football. He molded me like a piece of clay.

"There wasn't a day that Paul didn't talk to us about being a winner in life. He would say that football was just a stepping stone. He encouraged us to get jobs to prepare for the future. I went to work for a meat company. We all did something. Paul saw to that.

"That was a side of Paul that most people never saw. He could cut you to pieces on the practice field, then talk to you like a father an hour later.

"One time my wife visited me at training camp and brought our infant daughter. We were taking a walk when Paul came up behind us. He said, 'Bobby, is this your family?' I said yes and this big smile came across his face. I had never seen that from him before.

"The next morning on the practice field, it was business as usual. I dropped a ball and Paul gave me the stare."

"I thought going to a Paul Brown team, it would be football, football, and more football," says Bill Bergey, a linebacker with the Bengals from 1969-1973.

"I was really surprised at our first team meeting when Paul talked for two hours about everything *but* football. He said, 'You're in the big leagues now and you'll have a lot of people patting you on the back and whispering in your ear. Be careful. Be responsible. Act like men.'

"He seemed more like our guardian angel than our coach, talking about the evils of drinking and smoking and chasing around. I thought, 'Where am I, Boys Town? Is this really Paul Brown talking? Where's the football?' But this was the foundation. The X's and O's came later.

"Paul was very straight-laced, the straightest man I ever met. Every Saturday night before a game, he would take the whole team to a movie. It was always a G-rated movie, too. *Bambi, Son of Flubber*, something like that. A lot of players hated it, but it was mandatory. You had to go.

"Other teams knew about it and they would needle us. They'd say, 'What did you see last night? *Snow White*? *Cinderella*?' But Paul's attitude was, hey, if we put more points on the scoreboard, that's the best put-down in the world. And Paul's teams usually did that."

"Paul had tremendous charisma," says Tom Bass, who served as defensive coordinator under Brown in Cincinnati. "When he walked into a meeting room, everyone stopped talking. I saw players turn off the air conditioner at summer camp so they could hear Paul better. It has been said that players feared Paul, but I think it was more respect than fear. They respected who Paul was and what he stood for.

"We got most of our first [Bengals] team through the allocation draft, which meant we got players the other teams didn't want. We got a lot of guys who weren't, shall we say, the best citizens in the world. Yet these same characters joined our team and never missed a bed check, never caused a fuss, nothing.

"They knew they would have to answer to Paul and no one wanted to do anything that would reflect badly on the organization.

"Paul Brown is probably the most misunderstood figure in the history of professional football. I think it's unfortunate that so few people ever got to see the man that I knew so well. He wasn't cold, he was just the opposite."

In his 1974 book of poetry, *Pro Football from the Inside*, Bass wrote a poem about Brown entitled "Old Paul."

Pro Football from the Inside read, in part:

"I wish you knew him as I do, I wish you saw him with my eyes.

"I wish you felt the feelings I have felt, but that will never be.

"Your feeling of the man is based solely on those Sunday afternoons and the outcomes of the games.

The interview was winding down and someone asked Brown how he would like to be remembered. He looked puzzled.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"When you're gone," the reporter said. "What would you hope that people remember about you?" Brown thought a moment.

"I'd hope they remember my teams," he said. "My teams were what I was proudest of. Those players gave me so much happiness over the years.

"When I look back, I feel that I never worked a day in my life. What I did in football wasn't work, it was fun. It was sheer joy."

"I talked to Paul four days before he died," Otto Graham says. "I told him, 'You always told us to fight until the end. It's never over until you stop fighting.' He said, 'Otts, I'm just so tired.' That's when I knew it was almost over. It broke my heart to hear him say that.

"He was such a big part of my life, it didn't really hit me until he was gone. I went to his funeral and when I saw him in the casket, tears came to my eyes. I leaned over and kissed him on the forehead. I said goodby. It was so hard to do".

"All I know is I'm a better person for having known Paul Brown. And football is a better game for having him be a part of it." ■

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SPOTLIGHT

PHIL BARBER ON FOOTBALL

LXII: FOOTBALL IN THE FUSION AGE

RIO DE JANEIRO, February 21, 2028—Could any conclusion to any event have fit better? After two wacky, tumultuous weeks in a city that had gone certifiably *louco* over a football game, could any concluding image have been more appropriate than a loose ball bouncing freely, if erratically, toward an unmanned end zone? For evidence of the game's dramatic nature, take a look at the Super Bowl LXII highlight compilation, which NFL Films had put onto magnetic reso-disc and packaged before most of the fans had boarded the monorail.

From the moment one stepped into the Rio heat and realized that, yes, February is a summer month in South America, it was obvious this would be a Super Bowl like no other. From the tiny NFL shields that Brazil had sewn onto all national flags to promote the game to the giant football scenes projected onto the surrounding mountains at night, the developing giant spared few flourishes.

Perhaps the most amazing sideshow at Super Bowl LXII was the "NFL in Yo' Face" attraction at Disneyworld Rio, where the league held its gigantic party Friday night. Of course, everyone had seen the advertisements for this billion-dollar creation, but few could have been prepared for it. Just to suit up in the authentic NFL uniform of one's choice satisfied a nearly universal deep-seated desire, but the full production was unreal. A mixture of film images, real-life game sounds (and smells), and actors portraying savage defensive linemen, it was the closest most of us ever will get to taking a snap against an NFL defense. It was so realistic, in fact, that I was charged with intentional grounding on a crucial third-down play.

But it wasn't the fanfare, diverting as it may have been, that made this particular Super Bowl week so memorable; it was the two teams involved, the conference champions. This was the ultimate clash of worlds: the high-tech Hong Kong Dragons, the first team to train completely underwater, versus the blood-and-guts Los Angeles Raiders, who still wear silver and black as other teams move to fuchsia and mauve. The far-flung Eastern (Hemisphere) Conference against the Western Conference, made up primarily of long-time NFL teams. New versus Old. The Offense of the '30s vs. the Defense of the '20s.

The week-long interview process, conducted wholly through two-way closed-circuit television, was almost as colorful as the face-to-face press conferences of old. In only a limited number of cases was the plug pulled because of a displeasing query.

The star of Super Bowl week was Hong Kong's Takehiko Tsuchiya, the latest NFL head coach to be described as a "genius." Admittedly, the label isn't far from the mark this time. Born in Japan, educated at Tokyo University, Oxford, and MIT, Tsuchiya claims he "never watched a complete football game" until he worked on a certain doctoral thesis, an analysis of motion and force that concentrated on wide receivers being pummeled while running crossing patterns.

Since the completion of that project, Tsuchiya has thought about little other than football. Using his own copyrighted software programs to break down every NFL game of the last 25 years play by play, Coach T. claims to have determined the ideal formation and play for every conceivable situation, against any opponent.

"After running through five-hundred-thousand simulations of the game," he declared to an astonished press corps on Tuesday, "I have concluded that we will win 27-21...or possibly 30-21, depending on whether my kicker converts a third-quarter field-goal attempt. In addition, we will outrush the Raiders by 120-130 yards, and will hold an approximate two-to-one lead in time of possession."

"Why even play the game?" one reporter teased.

"The international television and sponsorship rights were negotiated long ago," Tsuchiya replied without smiling.

The coach's conclusions would have sounded like wild rantings, of course, had his team not soundly thrashed the NFL competition throughout the 2027 season. The Dragons, after finishing the regular season 18-2 and setting a league record with 249 rushing yards per game, were being compared to the greatest teams in NFL history, storied casts such as the '78 Steelers, the '89 49ers, the '03 Patriots, and, yes, even the '17 Conquistadores.

The Raiders, in contrast, stumbled and staggered a few times along the way to a 14-6 regular-season record. But after their 24-14 victory over "North America's Team," the rejuvenated Dallas Cowboys and their Doomsday V Defense, it was clear Los Angeles was a team to fear. The Raiders' catalyst, of course, is young Wingin' Willie Wadholm-Jermain, who became the first NFL quarterback ever to surpass 7,500 passing yards (7,584) in a single season in 2027. It

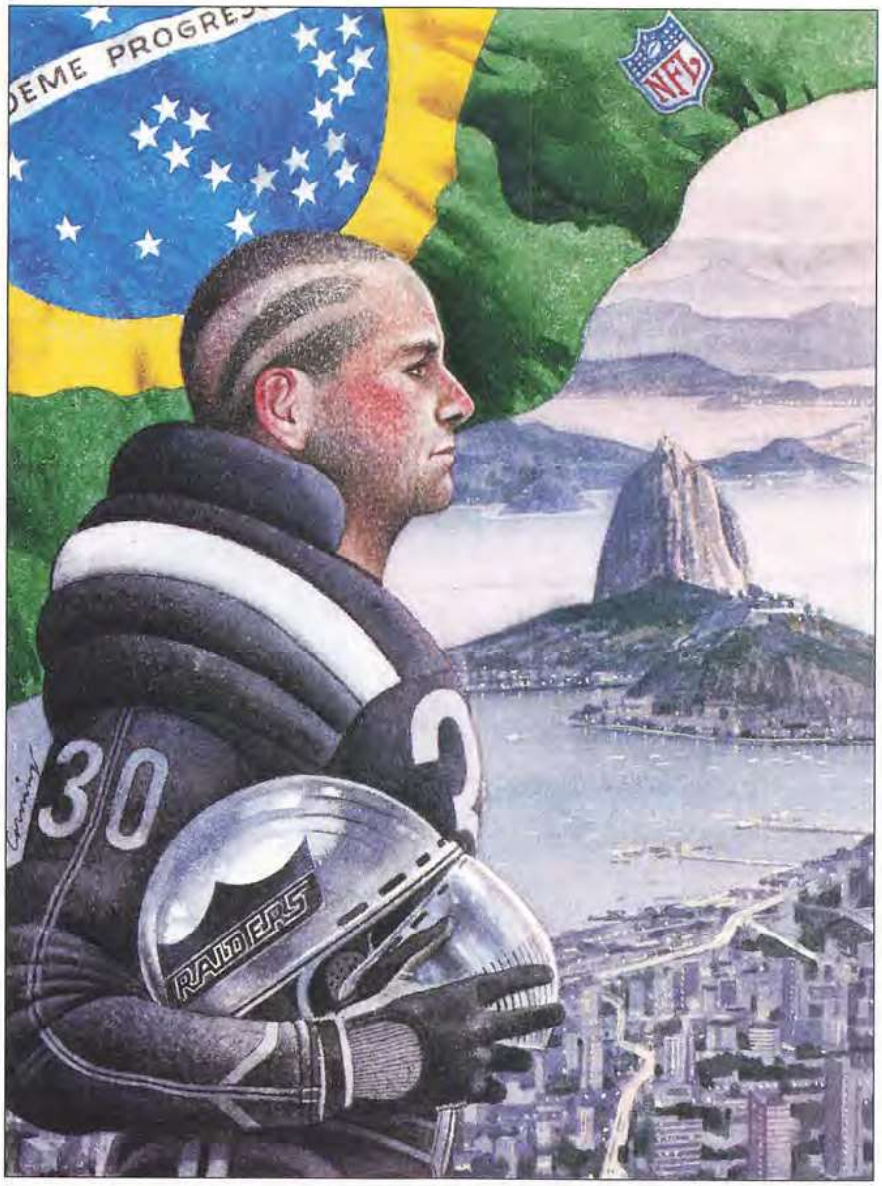
was only four years ago that Wadholm-Jermain led the Canadian football team to a gold medal in the 2024 Winter Olympics, and his legend has mushroomed ever since.

Though most of Wadholm-Jermain's teammates are too young to remember Al Davis, Ken Stabler, Howie Long, and the other Raiders of bygone eras, they seem to be cut from the same idiosyncratic mold. They curse, spit, and laugh just like Raiders always have, and apparently always will.

Another indication of how much things stay the same: Who but the Raiders would appoint the NFL's first female head coach? The decision to promote Dawn Shula-Rodriguez from offensive coordinator two years ago was met with reaction ranging from hearty applause to snickering. Men's rights groups even protested. But there can be little debate now as to whether Ms. Shula-Rodriguez inherited any of her grandfather's coaching genes. (Don Shula retired in 1999 as the winningest coach in NFL history.)

Shula-Rodriguez also has managed to retain her sense of humor under tremendous pressure. When asked Thursday if she had devised a new game plan to combat Tsuchiya's Fusion Age attack, she replied, "Yeah, we've installed the Run-and-Shoot," a tongue-in-cheek reference to the long-outmoded offense popularized in the 1990s.

The venue itself was a topic of much conversation as the game approached. The Brazil Dome—*O Domo Brasileiro*—is a model for all future super-stadiums. To put 118,000 spectators in comfortable pivoting seats, all of which provide good views of the on-field action, is impressive enough. But to think that the electricity for the arena—from the lighting to the heightened-resolution scoreboards to the card scanners at the merchandise stands—is completely solar-generated is to try the imagination.



Merv Corning

The decision to promote Dawn Shula-Rodriguez from offensive coordinator...met with reaction... from hearty applause to snickering.

The outside world first was treated to a glimpse of O Domo during the 2026 World Cup soccer finals (won by the upstart U.S. team, as if you needed a reminder), but the accommodations have gotten even better in the short time since. Each seat now is equipped with a personal video monitor that allows the fan to view the game action from his or her choice of camera angles, along with slow-motion replays of every down. Finally, the comforts of the living room, minus a robotic food-server, in the midst of a cheering throng.

Of course, the Brazil Dome wasn't the only stadium filled to capacity on Super Sunday. As were the last few Super Bowls, this year's game was played "live" in the home arenas of the two participating teams. Well, almost live—as the real Super Bowl LXII battle was waged here, holographic images of the game action simultaneously were beamed onto the fields of the Los Angeles Coliseum and Hong Kong's Giant Olive.

Kickoff, if you remember, originally had been scheduled for 4 P.M., Rio de Janeiro time, but was moved to 5:30 when a long-range forecast indicated ultraviolet radiation would be "heavy to unhealthful" about noon, when many fans would have been enjoying the exhibits outside the stadium.

The schedule change made it easy for all fans to be in their seats for the pregame festivities, which were highlighted by a musical

extravaganza called "Jump Back! The Godfather Turns 100." It was a rollicking tribute to James Brown, born in 1928. An address by NFL Commissioner Derrick Thomas—who joked about his former team, the Kansas City Chiefs, failing to repeat as Western Hemisphere champion in 2027—was followed by the National Anthems of the United States and Brazil, both performed by Old Kids on the Block. Many an eye misted as 55-year-old Donny thanked the audience for being a part of the Old Kids' worldwide reunion tour.

Then came the coin toss. When Roger Staubach, 86 years old and still looking fit as a midshipman, strode across the field to greet the 10 or 12 team captains and decide possession of the opening kickoff, the whole event took on a different perspective, at least for me.

Could it really have been 50 years ago that Staubach led the Cowboys to a 27-10 victory over the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XII? I was only 13 years old at the time, but I remember the game well. Thinking about it set my mind wandering through the many changes the game of football has experienced over the last five decades.

For instance, Super Bowl XII was the first one played indoors, at the original Louisiana Superdome. Yesterday's game also took place under a roof, but back in January of 1978 that meant an artificial surface. It was long before we learned how to grow natural grass indoors, before AstroTurf was outlawed. I remember joining those voices that harped about artificial turf; now I almost would say that I miss it, if only for the sake of nostalgia.

Of course, the equipment has changed dramatically. Gone are the hard-plastic helmets, bulky pads, cage facemasks, and relatively loose-fitting uniforms of the seventies. The NFL player of 2028 would sooner play with radioactive waste than take the field without his lightweight titanium helmet, skin-tight latex uniform equipped with durable airbags, and form-fitting cleats with built-in ankle wraps. And in-helmet radios for sideline-to-field communication? They would have seemed like science fiction back in '78.

The players have changed, too. Despite what most old fogies such as myself will tell you, today's players are bigger, stronger, and faster than those of my childhood. Sure, with 55 players on each active roster, they can afford to be more specialized as well (Dragons linebacker Tex Hager enters the lineup only on third-down plays with between 8 and 12 yards to go for a first down), but consider this comparison: The Cowboys' heaviest offensive lineman in Super Bowl XII was center John Fitzgerald, who weighed 260 pounds; the Raiders' starting offensive line for Super Bowl LXII *averaged* 335 pounds.

In 1977, footballs still were made of leather; assistant coaches numbered eight or nine per team, as opposed to the 21 on the Dragons' sideline yesterday; the goal posts were much wider (they were narrowed from 18 feet 6 inches to 12 feet 6 inches in 2018, when field-goal percentages routinely creeped above 90); and, gasp!, there was *no such thing* as instant replay in officiating. Who among us NFL fans would be brave enough to live without subjection to review now?—although, with sensors on the ball and laser beams across each sideline, goal line, and end line, plus another at the first down marker, the replay official doesn't get involved as much as he once did.

The NFL player of 2028 would sooner play with radioactive waste than take the field without his lightweight titanium helmet, skin-tight gortex uniform equipped with durable airbags, and form-fitting cleats with built-in ankle wraps.

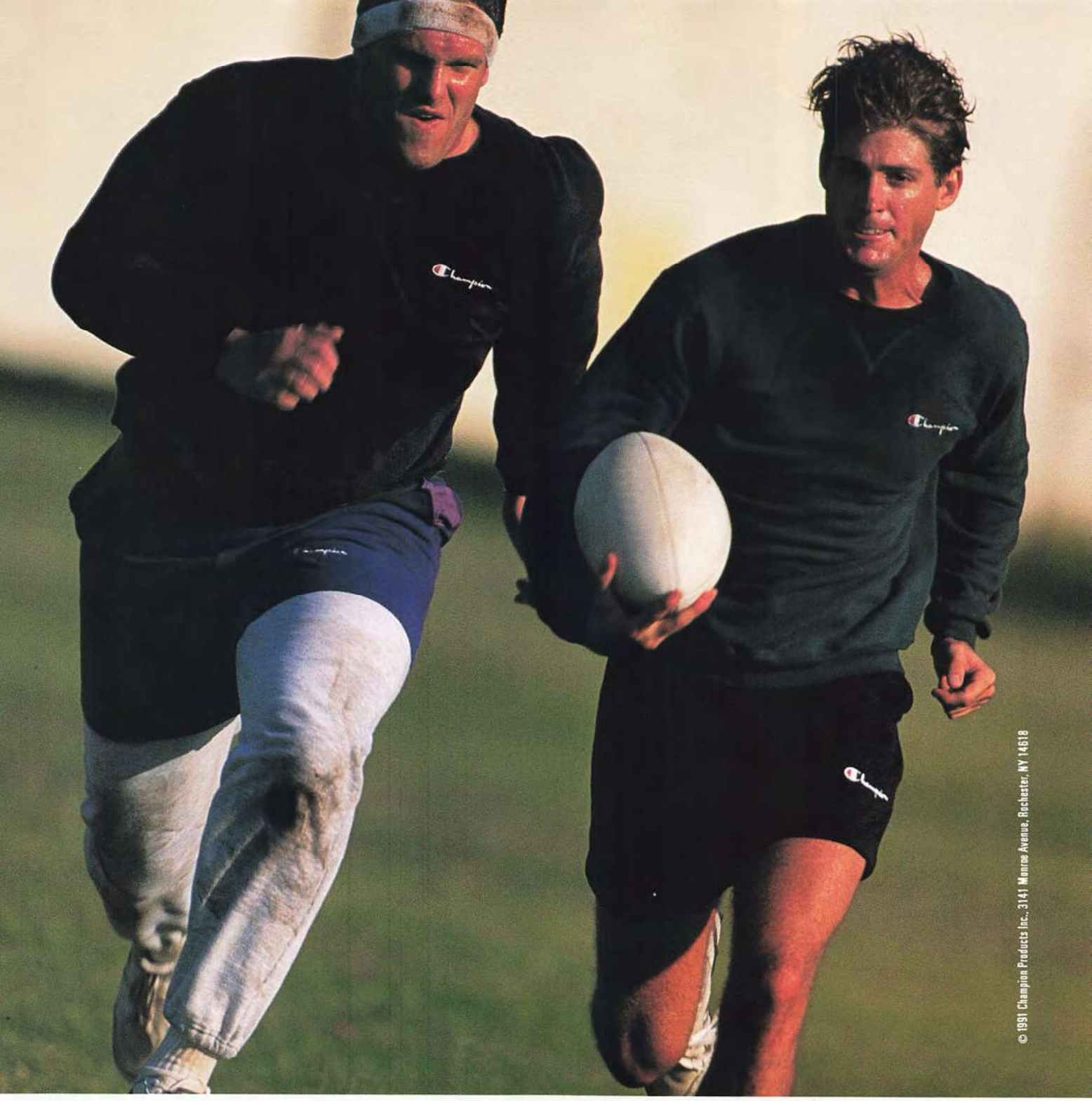
We interrupt this sentimental flashback to bring you...halftime! A lot of people thought last year's production at Wembley Stadium —a lifelike re-creation of the bombing of London during World War II—was the ultimate halftime show, but LXII's might have been its equal. This year's included a salute to the joint U.S.-Japanese space program, complete with 200 anti-gravity gymnasts and a working model of the manned capsule scheduled to blast off for Mars in 2030. More appropriate to the South American setting was a traditional ceremony by native Guarani dancers.

For highlights of the game itself, please turn to one of the 40 or so other Super Bowl stories in this NewsMail. Anyway, you probably were watching as closely as I was at the end of the fourth quarter when, despite a large advantage to the Dragons in yardage, first downs, and time of possession, the score was tied at 17-17. You probably witnessed the scene as Dragons quarterback James Kaplan-Lopes-Baban dropped back to pass with the clock winding down and was hit by two Raiders defensive ends at once, the ball squirting free and bouncing, drifting into the Hong Kong end zone, where Los Angeles linebacker Nik Pontino fell on it for the winning score.

Moments later, the game was over, and the ecstatic Raiders dumped a tub of kelp-and-pollen liquid protein supplement over the head of Shula-Rodriguez. Still damp in the locker room afterward, she said, "The only hard drives that win football games are in the heart, not in a computer."

What a coach! What a woman! Maybe we'll see her at Carnival next weekend.

Notes: The ratings for the Global Broadcasting Company's telecast were tabulated immediately after the game, and the worldwide audience was estimated at 1.45 billion. The American television audience was placed at 204,312,000, making Super Bowl LXII the third-most-watched program in United States history, behind games L and LVII. Nine of the all-time top 10 broadcasts have been Super Bowls, the sole exception being the farewell episode of "The Simpsons" in 2011...The capacity in-stadium crowd consumed approximately 33,000 soy dogs, 40,000 bags of peanuts, 24,000 *churraquinhos*, 7,500 iguana burgers, 13,000 gallons of water, 8,000 gallons of soft drinks, and 13,000 gallons of Chug beer substitute...One of the nearly 1,000 photographers outlining the Domo Brasileiro field was John Biever, who at the age of 80 is the last surviving member of the "Super Bowl Club," meaning he has photographed every Super Bowl. Biever shot LXII with a 1990s-era antique Canon...Late in the second quarter, the Raiders' defense was flagged for illegal zone coverage. It was the first time the new rule, designed to help open up the passing game, had been applied in the Super Bowl...Each member of the Raiders received a silver-plated ear- or nose-ring, cast as a miniature Vince Lombardi Trophy...About 20 minutes before the game, the Sony blimp and the General Electric blimp—two of the many circling O Domo—inadvertently bumped. Angry words were exchanged, but no injuries were reported...The featured attraction at Super Bowl Card Show XXXIX, housed in an enormous tent outside the stadium, was NFL Pro Set's current 2,750-card set, which includes full movement-and-sound images of every NFL player active in 2027. ■



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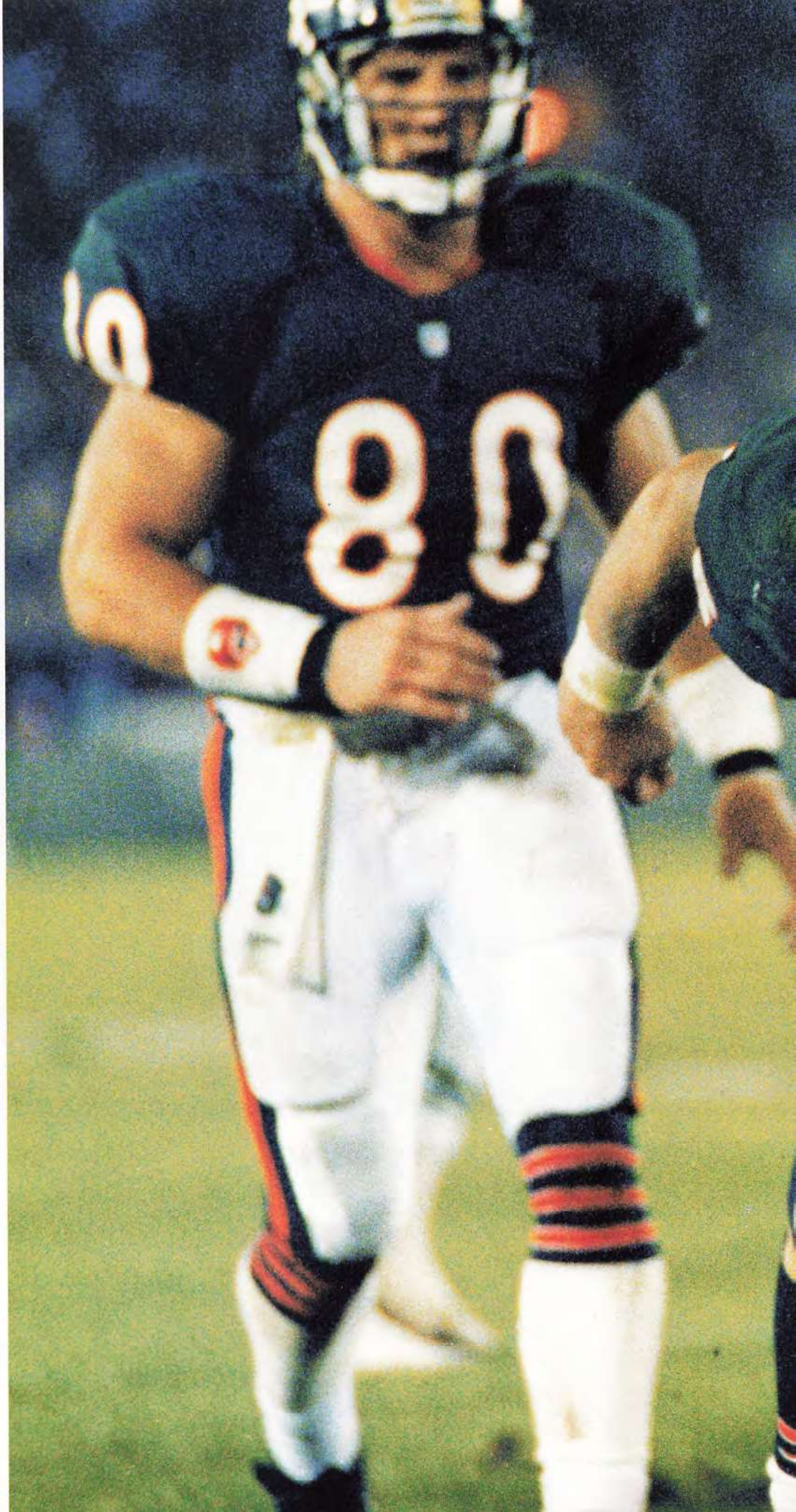
SPOTLIGHT

IMAGES OF 1991

Four Months of Excitement

When the season began on the Sunday before Labor Day, the nation was squeezing the last pleasure out of summer. When it finally ended on a Monday night in December, there was only one shopping day left before Christmas. In between, runners hurried downfield, receivers soared after passes, and defenders tried to clamp down on both of them. Some of those memorable moments are captured here.



Chicago Tribune

Here's Mud in Your Eye
Bears tight end Cap Boso came up with a face full of turf after catching a 23-yard pass against the Jets to set up the winning touchdown in Chicago's dramatic 19-13 overtime victory on a Monday night.

Greg Crisp

Kevin Terrell

At Least He Got a Good View of the Grass

Brian Mitchell would do anything to help the Redskins win—even stand on his head. Although the Houston Oilers turned him upside down here, Mitchell was not easy to tackle. He finished second in the NFL in punt returns (13.3-yard average), returning 2 for touchdowns.

Meeting the Bills Up Close and Personal

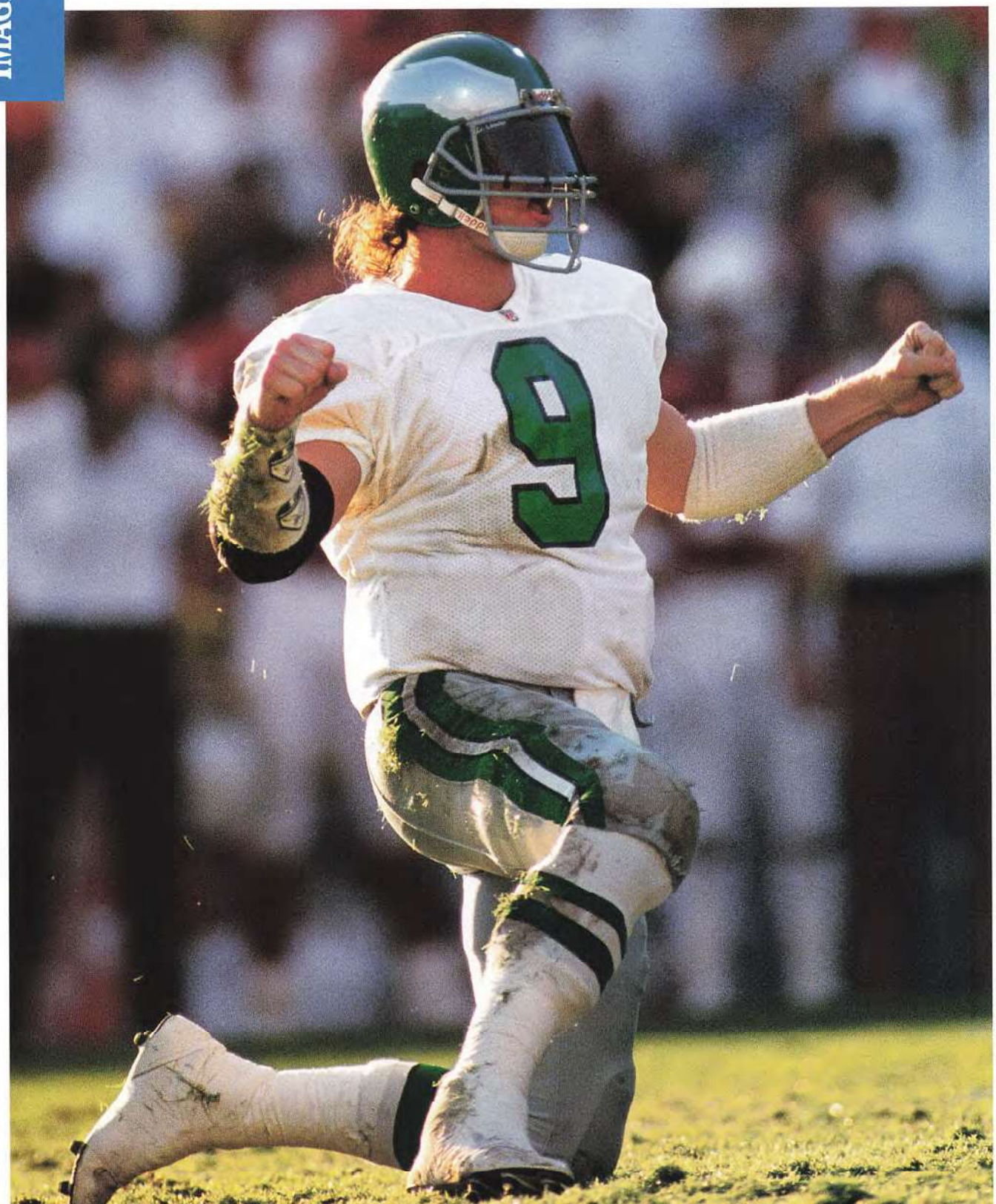
Quarterbacks get a lot of glory and make a lot of money, but they pay for it. The Raiders' Jay Schroeder grimaced when he was sandwiched by Buffalo linebackers Shane Conlan (58) and Darryl Talley.

The Eagles' Two-Fisted Quarterback

The Eagles lost quarterback Randall Cunningham for the season with a knee injury in the first game, but fiery Jim McMahon led the team to a 9-2 record in games in which he played more than three quarters. Unfortunately, McMahon twice went out with injuries, too, and the Eagles just missed the playoffs, despite going 10-6.

The Receiver Was Outnumbered

The Kansas City Chiefs have one of the best secondaries in the NFL as this helpless Denver receiver found out. While cornerback Kevin Ross (31) hit him from the left, safety Deron Cherry clobbered him from the right.



Peter Read Miller

Peter Read Miller

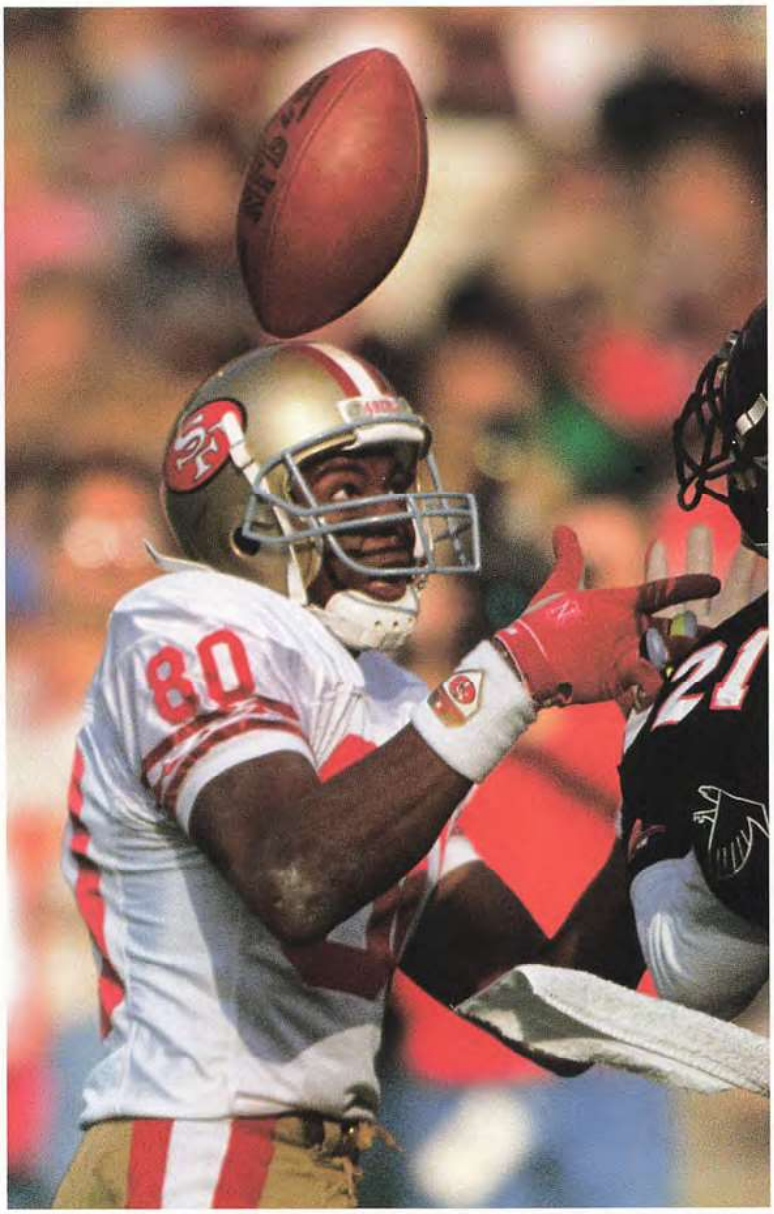
Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Ditka Is at Home in the Cold

Bears head coach Mike Ditka doesn't like playing in domed stadiums—he would rather be outside, never mind the cold. In Chicago, when your breath steams like this, they call it Bear Weather.

Let's See, the Ball's Around Here Somewhere

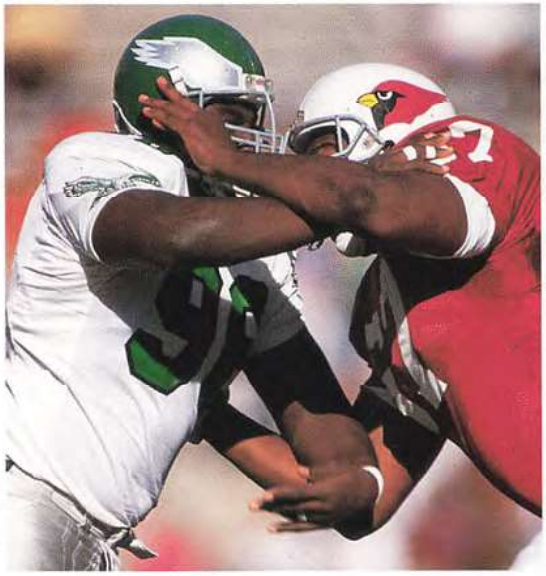
San Francisco's Jerry Rice (left) had another great season, catching 80 passes for 14 touchdowns. But it looked as if he was trying to catch the ball with his helmet when he and Atlanta cornerback Deion Sanders (21) fought over it one Sunday afternoon.



Bill Mount

Hard To Pick a Winner

One-on-one confrontations don't get much better than this. Eagles defensive end Clyde Simmons (left) was named to start the Pro Bowl; Phoenix tackle Luis Sharpe has gone to the Pro Bowl three times.

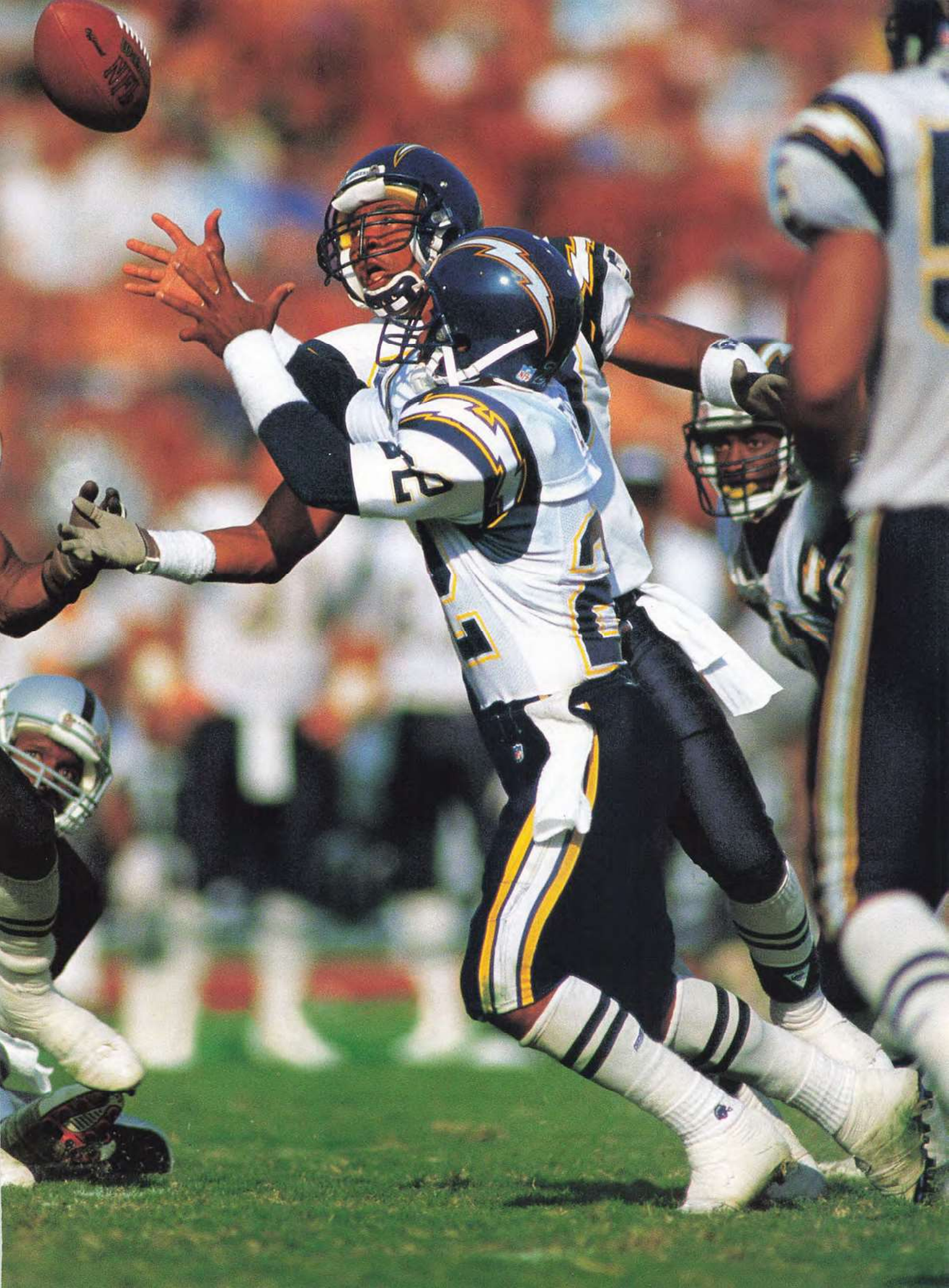


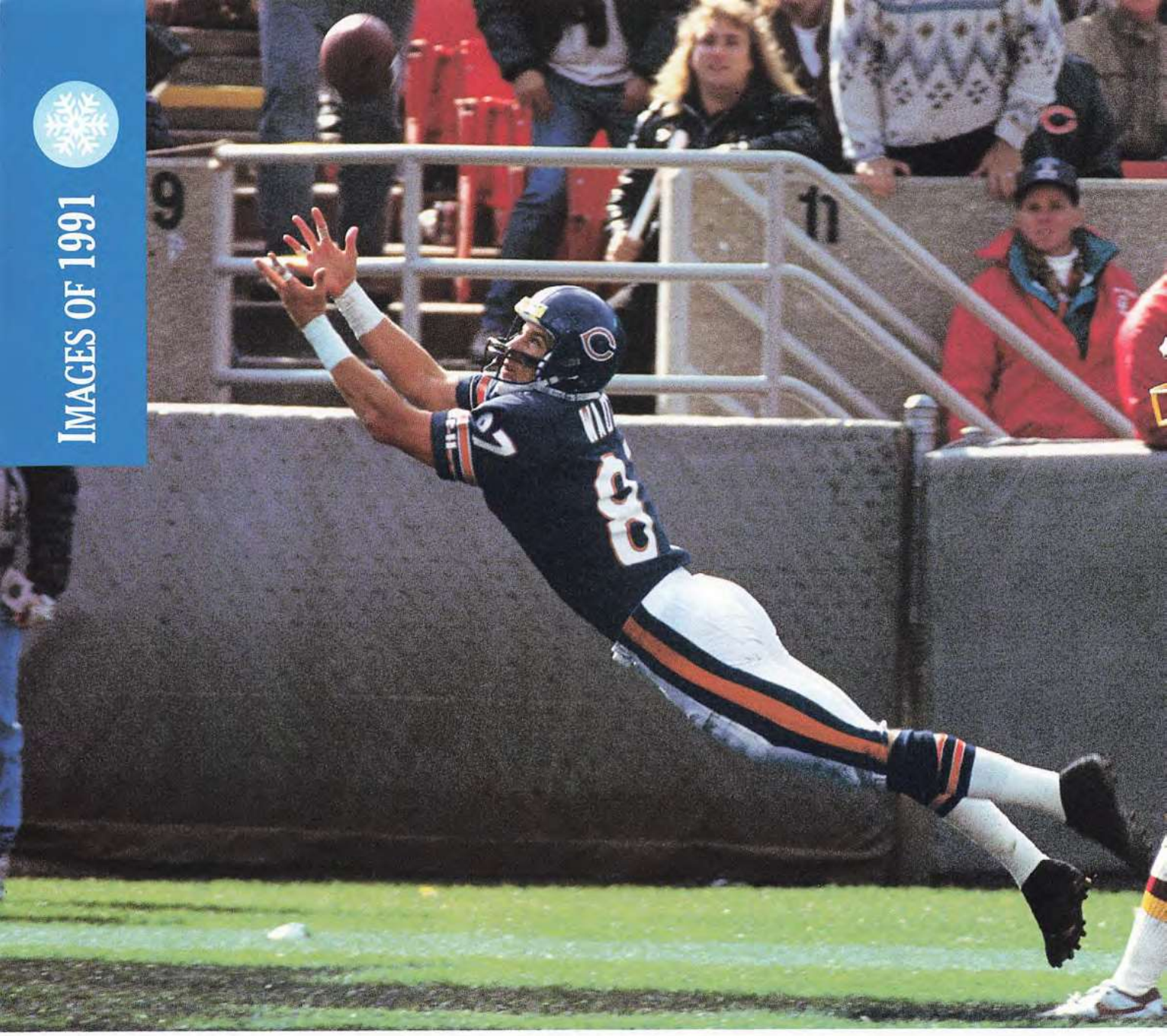
Andy Hayt

Two Are Better Than One

Los Angeles quarterback Jay Schroeder's pass sailed over his intended receiver, but it was an inviting target for San Diego defensive backs Gill Byrd (left) and Darren Carrington. Byrd made the interception, and the Chargers surprised the Raiders 21-13.

Amos Love





Don Lansu

Some People Will Do Anything to Catch a Ball

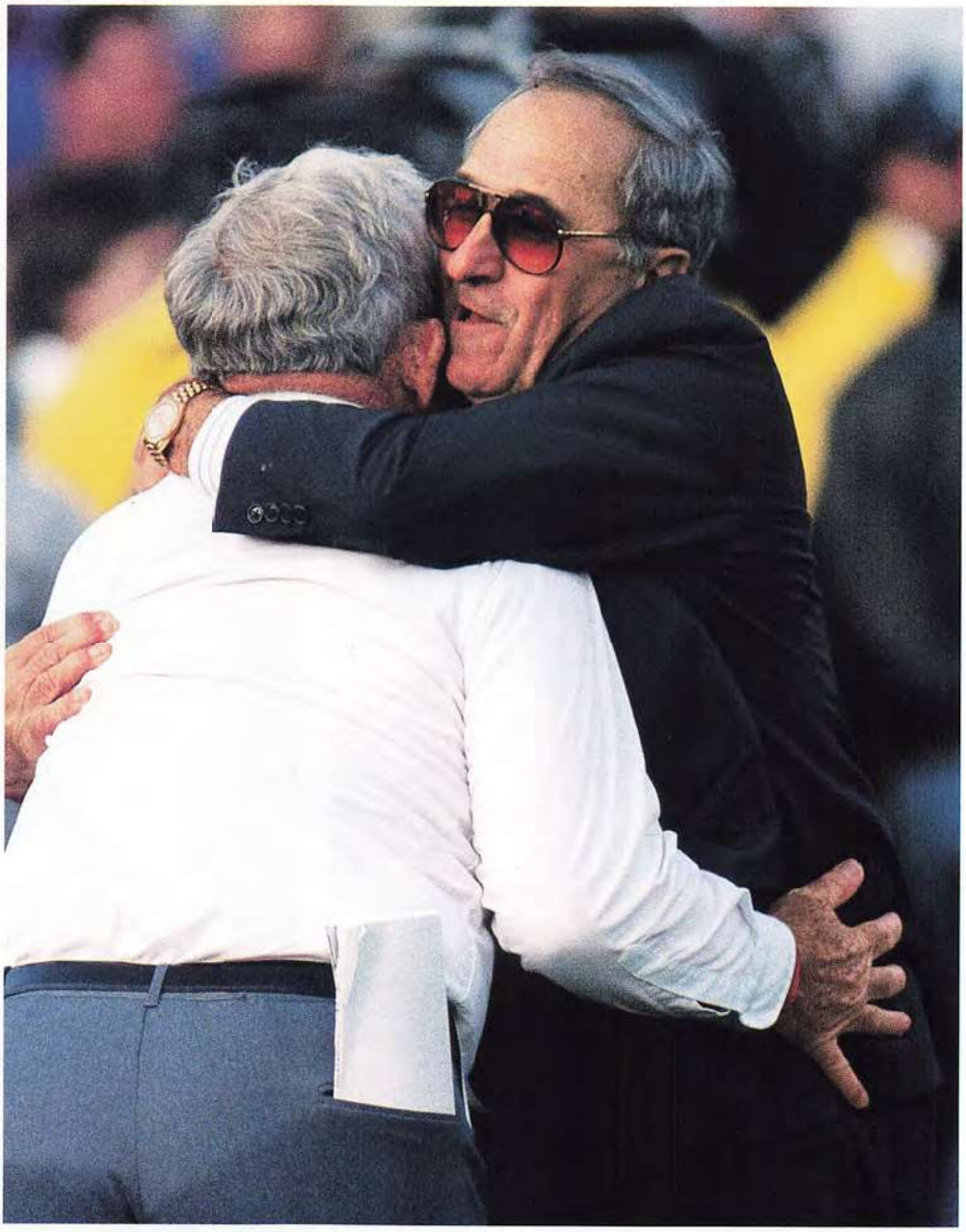
At least Chicago's Tom Waddle (above) would. The Bears' third-year wide receiver made acrobatic catches all season. But even this all-out effort couldn't help Chicago against the Redskins, who won 20-7.

The Pride Is Back

New head coach Dick MacPherson (coatless, top right) restored the pride and competitiveness of the New England Patriots. In the season's fourth week, New England surprised previously unbeaten Houston 24-20 and earned MacPherson a hug from chief executive officer Sam Jankovich.

Piel Gets a Piggyback Ride

With quarterback Timm Rosenbach out for the season, rarely used Tom Tupa (right) began the year as a starter for Phoenix. Even though he took a shot from Rams defensive tackle Mike Piel, Tupa led the Cardinals to a 24-14 opening-day victory.

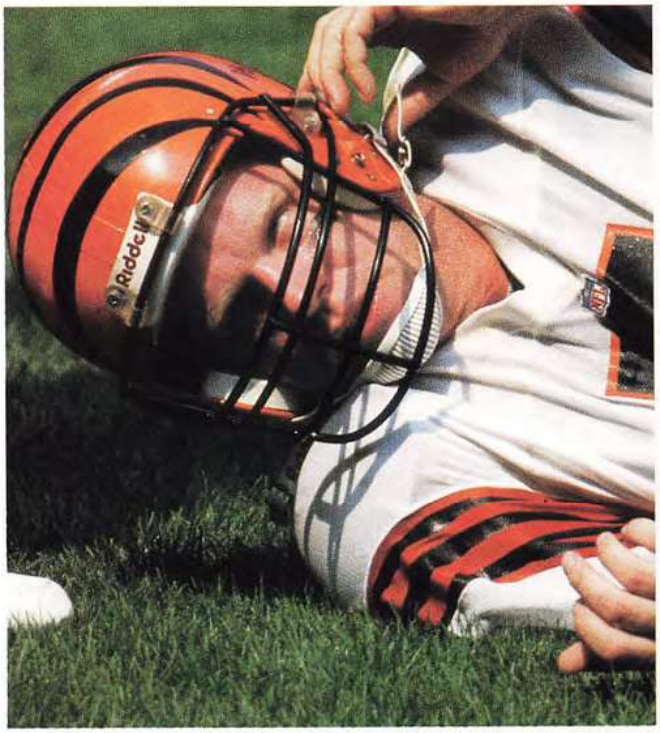


Arthur Anderson

PRM

Holt Was a Lifesaver for the Cowboys

Dallas turned the corner and became a contender with an early season, come-from-behind 21-16 victory over the Giants. Cornerback Issiac Holt (30) clinched the victory on an end-zone interception with 1:11 left to play.



Michael Heinz

Boomer and the Bengals Down for the Count

AFC Central Division champions in 1990, the Cincinnati Bengals collapsed in 1991. This shot of groggy quarterback Boomer Esiason seemed to sum up the season for a team that lost its first eight games and never recovered.

James D. Smith

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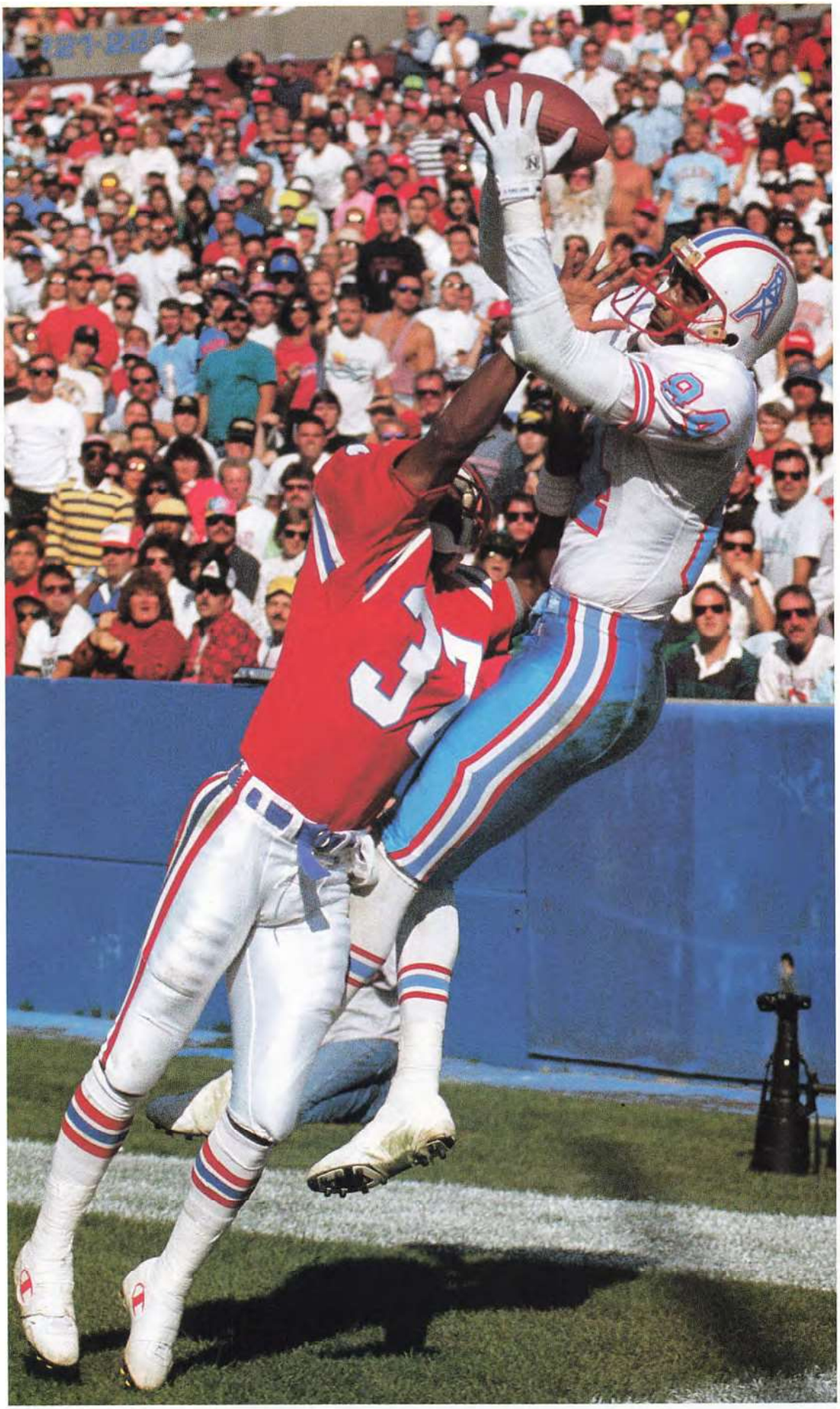
Next, the Olympics? *Miami running back Mark Higgs looked like an old-fashioned high jumper when he flew over Buffalo's line for a 3-yard touchdown. Despite Higgs's 146 rushing yards, the Bills won 35-31.*

Close, But No Touchdown

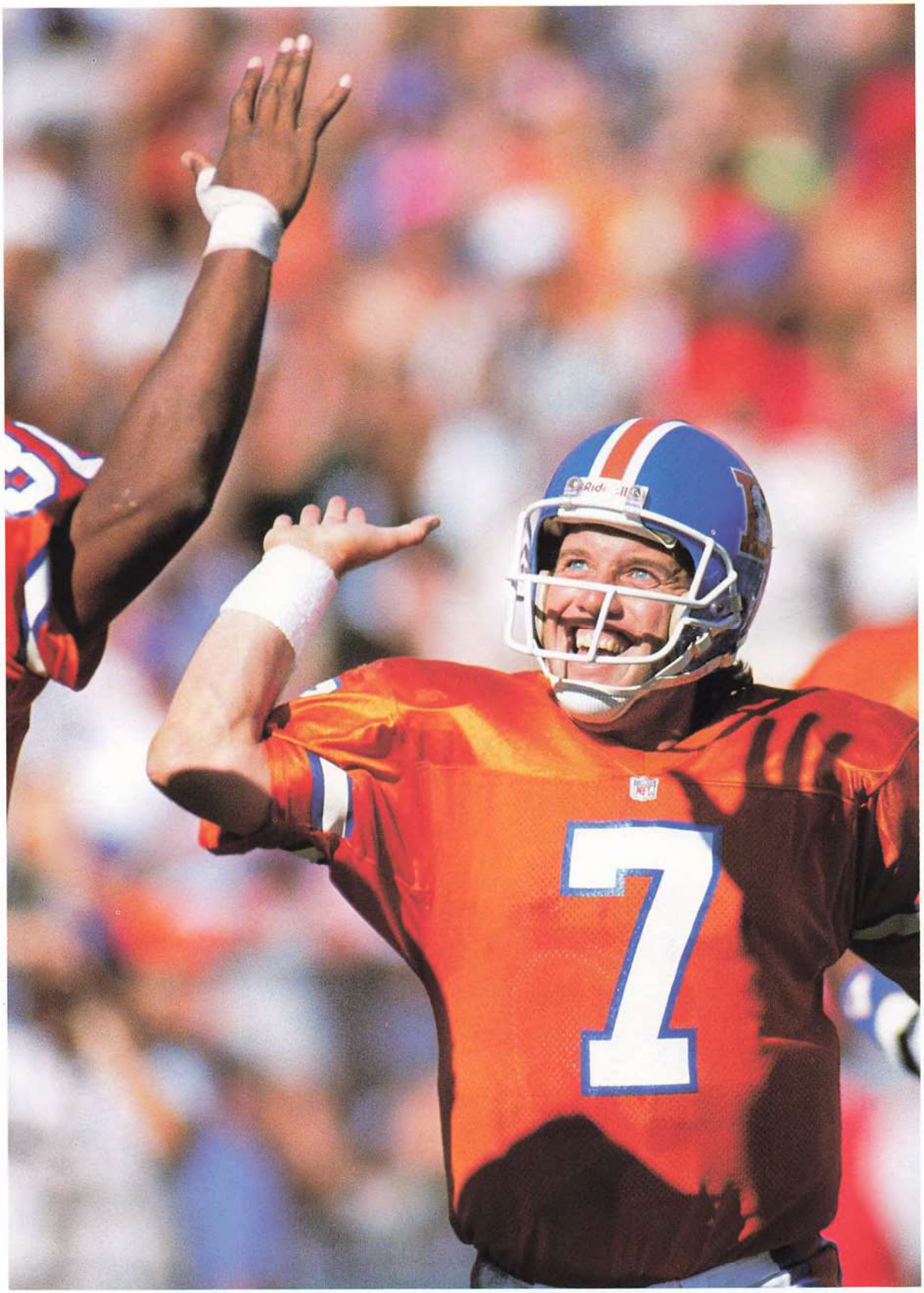
Houston's Haywood Jeffires made a spectacular catch against New England cornerback Maurice Hurst, but his momentum carried him out of the end zone, and it was only an acrobatic incompletion.



Dave Silverman

Amos Love

The Lion Stops Here
Barry Sanders and the Lions were driving for a playoff berth when they were stalled by Tampa Bay 30-21. Nose tackle Tim Newton wrapped up Sanders.



High Fives All Around in Denver

Bob Rosato

John Elway had good reason to be excited. The Broncos' quarterback passed for 2 touchdowns and ran for 2 in a rout of Cincinnati.

Fall in love with the details.

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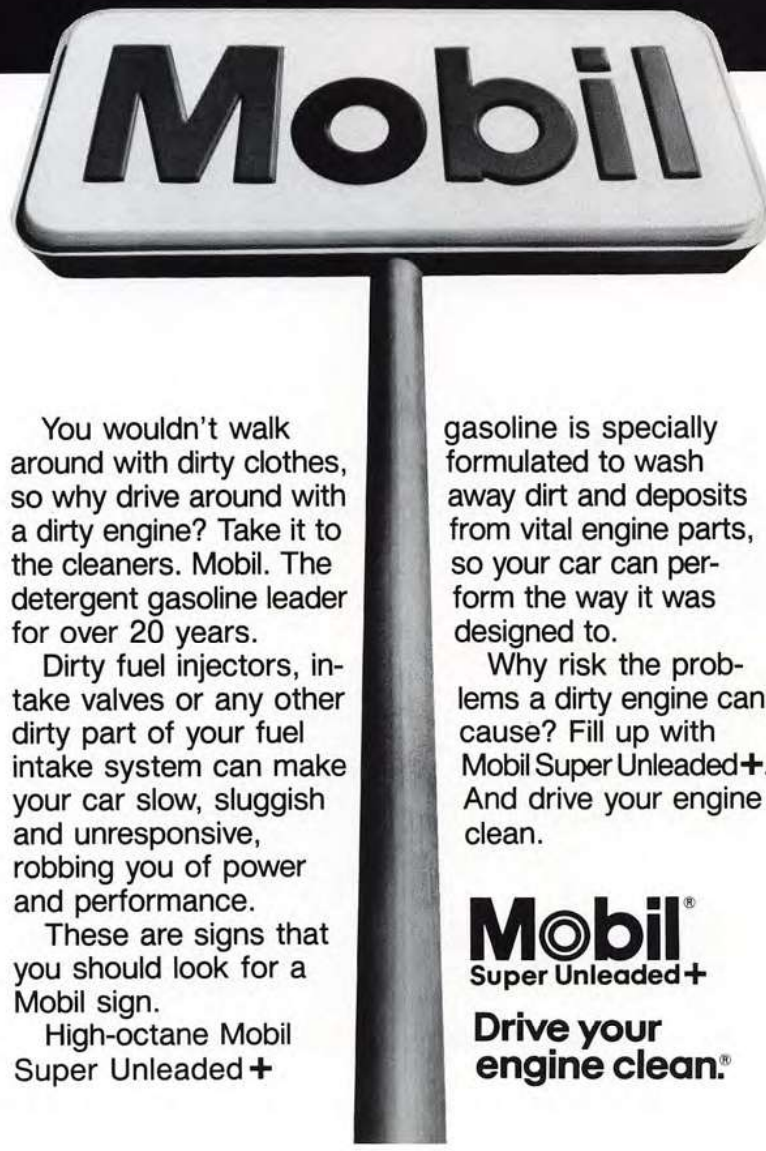
SONY

Take your dirty engine to the cleaners.



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These are signs that you should look for a Mobil sign.

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Drive your engine clean.®

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1991 REPLAY

Week-by-Week Review of the Season in Words and Photographs

By Jim Perry

47 players get Super Bowl™ rings. Only one gets this.

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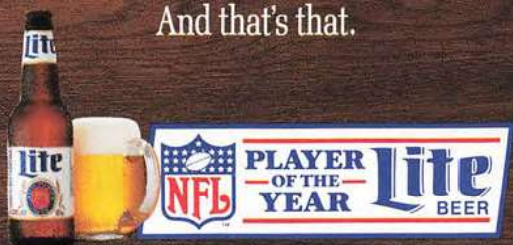
And the one player who plays best all year is "it," too.
Miller Lite's NFL Player of the Year.
Only one man will be it, only one man will get the trophy.
And that's that.



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THINK WHEN YOU DRINK™

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WEEK 1

SEPTEMBER 1

It's an NFC East Sweep, but... Eagles Lose Cunningham for Season; Seahawks Lose a Game and Krieg

Considering what happened, Rich Kotite almost looked as if he could predict the future.

A week before his first regular-season game as Eagles head coach, Kotite was asked about backup quarterback Jim McMahon.

"This guy is a winner," Kotite said, "and I'm certainly glad we have him.

"We've got a great one in Randall Cunningham, but you need two of them. Too many teams have gone down the drain because when their top guy goes down, they have nothing."

On opening day in Green Bay, the top guy went down on the first play of the second quarter.

The game was scoreless when Cunningham was tackled just after releasing a pass. The result was two torn ligaments in his left knee. The Eagles' Pro Bowl quarterback had surgery the next week and was declared out for the season.

It was a stunning blow, but almost as predicted, McMahon came off the bench and went on to lead the Eagles to victory. The former Bears' quarterback passed for 257 yards and 2 touchdowns—32 yards to Keith Byars and 75 yards to Fred Barnett—and Philadelphia routed the Packers 20-3.

McMahon not only was good, he was lucky. Byars caught the first touchdown pass lying on his back in the end zone after the ball was tipped twice by Packers safety Chuck Cecil.

"My confidence level always has been the same," said McMahon, who threw only 9 passes in 1990. "When I'm in the game, I expect to make big plays."

The Eagles were not the only team in the NFC East making big plays. All five teams in the division won.

The Super Bowl-champion Giants beat the 49ers 16-14, Washington routed Detroit 45-0, Phoenix surprised the Rams 24-14, and Dallas defeated Cleveland 26-14.

Bruce Dierdorff

Randall Cunningham's season didn't last long. He suffered a severe knee injury on the second quarter's first play.

The week's most dramatic victory came on Monday night in Giants Stadium. San Francisco's Joe Montana was sidelined with a torn tendon in his right elbow, but Steve Young gave the 49ers a 14-13 fourth-quarter lead on a 73-yard scoring pass to Jerry Rice and a 5-yard touchdown run.

But, with time ticking away, Jeff Hostetler drove the Giants 60 yards to the 49ers' 18, then held the ball for Matt Bahr, who kicked a 35-yard field goal to win the game with five seconds remaining.

Bahr has his act down pat. In the 1990 NFC Championship Game, he sent the Giants to Super Bowl XXV on a 42-yard field goal, which beat the 49ers 15-13 as the clock hit 0:00.

New York's win gave Ray Handley a victory in his first game as head coach, and also snapped the 49ers' NFL-record 18-game road winning streak.

"We'll be ready for the Giants in the playoffs," 49ers linebacker Charles Haley warned.

Another team aiming at the playoffs was Washington, out of the gate fast with its mauling of Detroit. It was the most lopsided regular-season victory in Redskins' history, and the team's fourteenth successive win over the Lions. On the way to 45-0, the Redskins led 35-0 at halftime.

"Everything we did worked," head coach Joe Gibbs said.

Mark Rypien completed 15 of 19 passes for 2 touchdowns, Earnest Byner ran for 1 touchdown and passed 18 yards to Ricky Sanders for another, and Brian Mitchell returned a punt 69 yards for a score. Cornerback Darrell Green intercepted 2 passes to set up 2 touchdowns.

The Lions played without Barry Sanders, the NFL's leading rusher in 1990, who had to sit out

SHOOT TO THRILL

New England quarterback Tommy Hodson scarcely could believe his eyes.

As he headed off the field following his 23-yard touchdown pass to tight end Marv Cook, he looked up to see coach Dick MacPherson shooting at him.

Or, to be exact, the exuberant MacPherson was pumping his hands as if they were six-shooters and firing imaginary bullets.

"He's giving me the pistol shots over there with both hands," Hodson said, "and I'm thinking, 'What's this guy doing? He's sixty years old, he's giving me pistol shots, and that's funny.' I kind of shot bang-bang-bang back at him."

Hodson and the Patriots had gone into their season opener at Indianapolis with a 14-game, regular-season losing streak. But they emerged with a one-game winning streak after defeating the Colts 16-7.

"It was a great day for Patriots football," MacPherson said. "We worked together, played together, and prayed together to get this win."

Two-Gun MacPherson inspired the Patriots.

The victory over Indianapolis in MacPherson's first regular-season game as head coach was aided by Hodson's touchdown pass, and 3 field goals by Jason Staurovsky. It was the team's first victory since a 16-14 win over the Colts in the second game of the 1990 season.

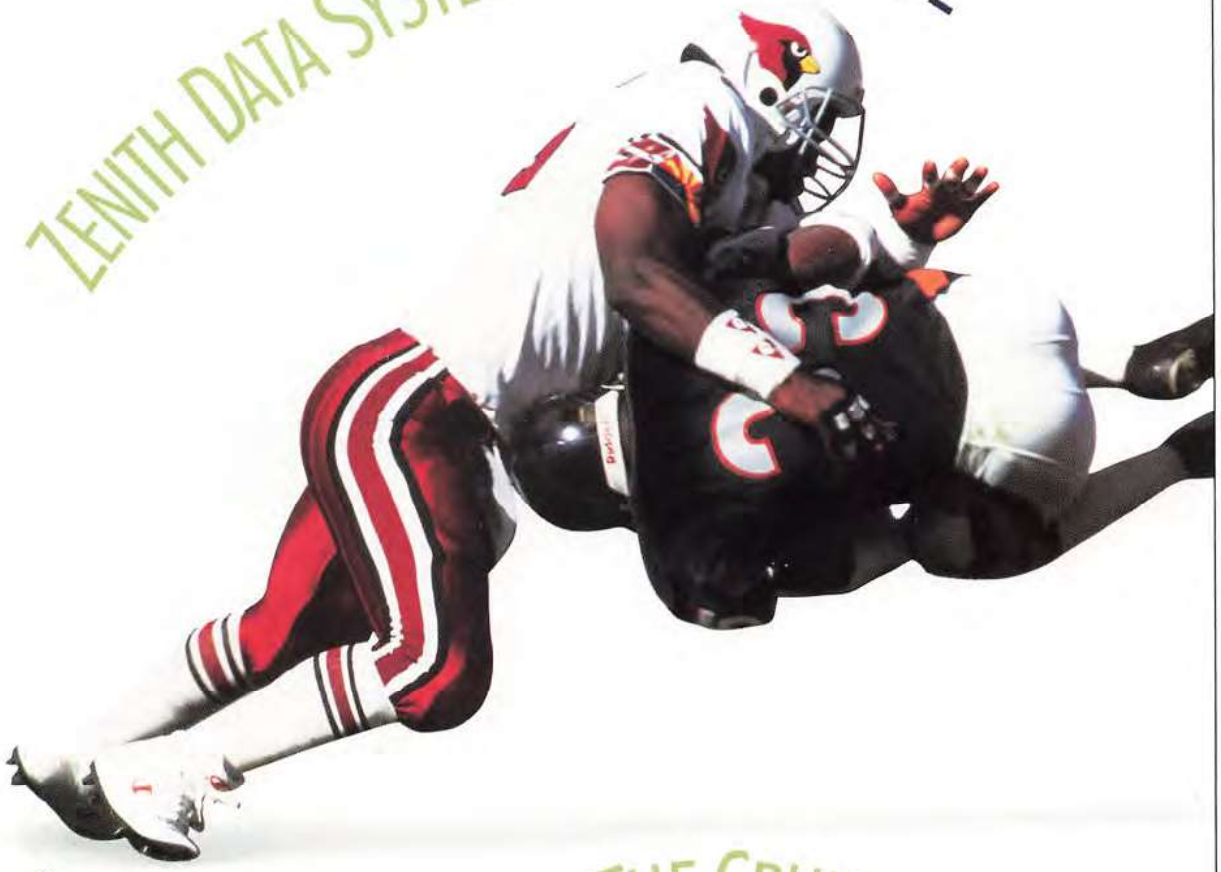
The victory also was a tribute, the players said, to a sense of enthusiasm and confidence brought by MacPherson, who had spent his previous 10 years at Syracuse, where he posted a 66-46-4 record.

"There's a whole new excitement here," veteran safety Fred Marion said. "It's a great feeling. The confidence is back. Guys know they can win again. We believe in each other."

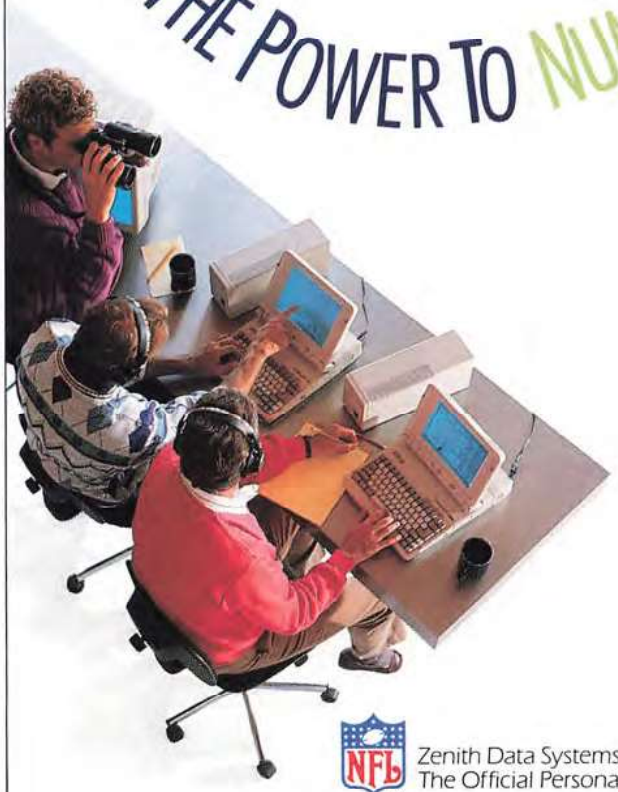
"When you make good plays, he praises you," wide receiver Irving Fryar said, "and when you do something wrong, he tells you it's not the end of the world. That makes you want to keep punching."

Tom Miller

ZENITH DATA SYSTEMS GIVES THE NFL



THE POWER TO NUMBER THE CRUNCHES.



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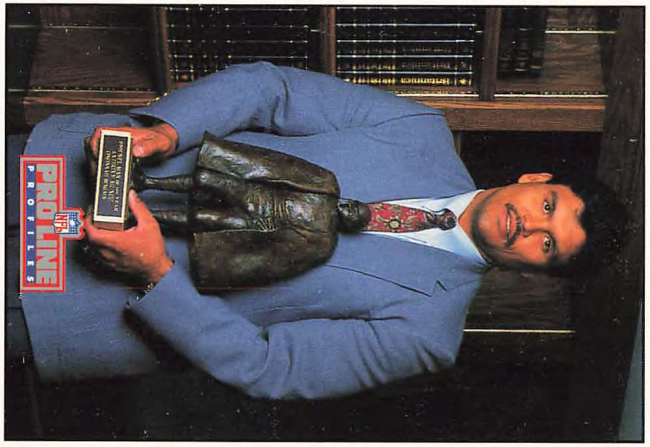
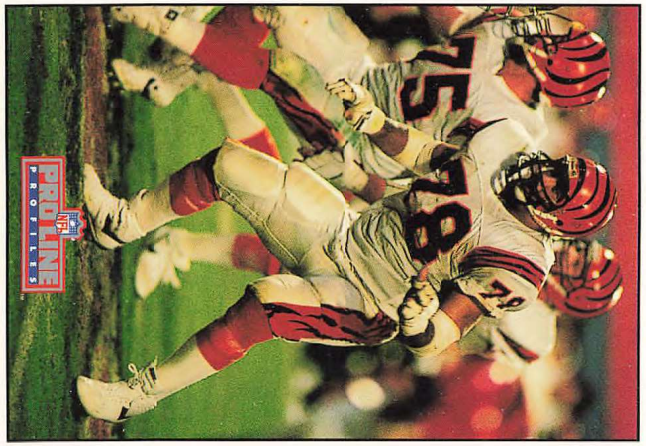
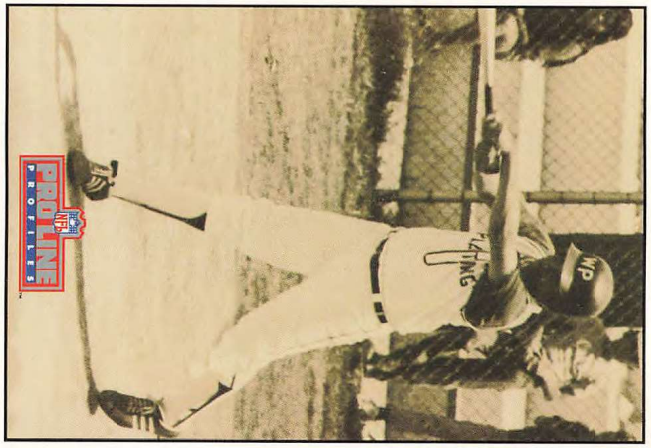
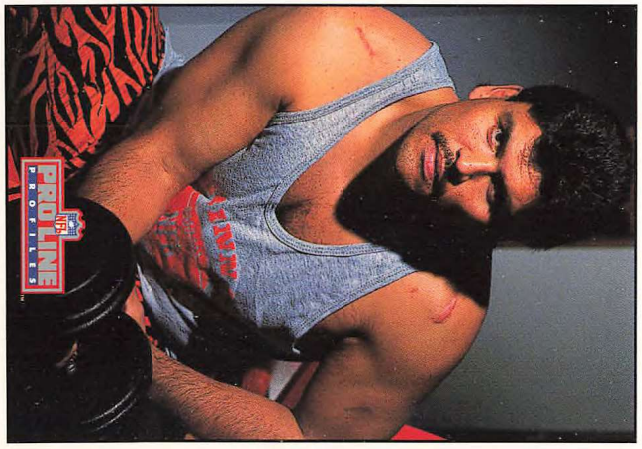








ANTHONY MUÑOZ 3 OF 9

Sitting in the stands with his sons Mike and Pete Brown at the Rose Bowl in January, 1980, the late Paul Brown knew USC's Anthony Muñoz would be his choice with the third overall selection in the NFL draft. ***"We sat there and laughed out loud,"*** said Mike Brown after watching Muñoz lead the way on an 83-yard march—all on the ground—to the winning touchdown in the final minutes. ***"The guy was so big and so good it was a joke."*** But Muñoz's injury problems in college were no laughing matter. As a senior, he was hurt in the first game, had his third knee surgery, and didn't return until the Rose Bowl. ***"The injuries taught me one thing,"*** says Muñoz, who has missed only four games due to injury in his 12-year NFL career. ***"That's the importance of physical conditioning, doing as much as you can to physically get ready to play. That's been the key to my career in the NFL."***

84

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 2 OF 9

Anthony Muñoz never knew his father. His mother Esther raised her five children. ***"I guess I didn't realize what I was missing. My mom always made sure we had a ball glove and a baseball bat when Little League season came around."*** The lack of a father and economic hardship as a child did not keep Muñoz from realizing the importance of family. ***"The family is where it all begins. It's great when you come home and you've just been beaten by thirty points and your kids say 'great game' and give you a big hug and kiss. The family is where I prefer to put all my energy. I have two kids, Michael and Michelle, that I enjoy being with, and a beautiful relationship with my wife DeDe. To me that's everything."***

83

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 1 OF 9

"During the school year, whatever sunlight you had after school and doing homework, you went out and played baseball, basketball, or football. That's what I enjoyed doing." That's not unlike many youngsters. But Anthony Muñoz grew up to become perhaps the NFL's finest offensive lineman. A native of Ontario, California, he attended Chaffey High School there and the University of Southern California in nearby Los Angeles. After earning a bachelor's degree in public administration at USC in 1980, he was selected by the Cincinnati Bengals in the first round of the NFL draft. Long active in the community, Muñoz was named the 1991 NFL Man of the Year, annually awarded to the player who best combines on-field excellence with civic contributions.

82

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 6 OF 9

In 1981, the Cincinnati Bengals earned their first trip to the Super Bowl by dominating the San Diego Chargers 27-7 in the AFC Championship Game. The temperature at game time was nine degrees below zero, with a 35-mile-per-hour wind creating a wind-chill factor of minus 59. ***"My biggest game would have to be the AFC Championship Game in my second season. We had come off a 6-10 year and all of a sudden we were 12-4 and playing for a chance to go to the Super Bowl. It was so cold [that day] that it hurt. It was crazy cold. A lot of times as you get into the game, adrenaline creates heat. Not on that day. I remember our black face-masks were covered with frost."***

Muñoz has had other big moments, including 4 touchdown receptions as an eligible player.

87

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 5 OF 9

CINCINNATI BENGALS • OFFENSIVE TACKLE

COLLEGE: USC
NFL EXP: 12TH YEAR
DRAFTED 1ST ROUND '80

BORN: ONTARIO, CA
BIRTHDATE: 8/19/58
HT: 6-6 WT: 284

PRO LINE PROFILES ©1992 NFL PROPERTIES

86

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 4 OF 9

"Maybe some way, not in a huge or tremendous way, but in a small way, I can give the person who might not have an opportunity a chance to do some of the things that they dream about." That is Anthony Muñoz's reason for contributing to charitable causes. ***"I got involved with Children's Hospital*** **[front]** ***because of the way they help families, the way they help kids that are hurting. I didn't get the full impact of what Children's Hospital does until my son Michael was about six years old. He had an emergency appendectomy, and we had to spend about five days there. It was just amazing to watch them work. I try to make visits there often because the kids are very special."***

All In a Day's Work
In addition to Children's Hospital, Anthony Muñoz donates time or money to Athletes in Action, Campus Crusade for Christ, Cystic Fibrosis, United Appeal, Teen Challenge, the Salvation Army, and Citizens for Community Values.

85

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 9 OF 9

"My number-one goal is to try to physically dominate the guy across from me because if I don't, it's going to be my quarterback or running back who's going to pay for it. People look at my [mild] personality [off the field] and ask me how I can make a sudden change on the field. It isn't that I have to be mean or nasty, I just turn up my intensity level. I don't know if you can see the fear as much as you can feel it—the wearing down of someone. I can't say I've looked into an opponent's eyes and thought, 'Yeah, the guy's scared of me.' People often think that offensive linemen are passive, the defensive player does all the hitting. It doesn't have to be that way. We can deliver blows, too."

Recent NFL Man of the Year Winners
1991 Anthony Muñoz
1990 Mike Singletary
1989 Warren Moon
1988 Steve Largent
1987 Dave Duerson
1986 Reggie Williams

90

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 8 OF 9

"There is nothing to compare to playing in the Super Bowl," says Anthony Muñoz, who twice helped the Cincinnati Bengals come close to upending Joe Montana and the San Francisco 49ers in the Super Bowl, losing 26-21 in Super Bowl XVI and 20-16 in Super Bowl XXIII, when San Francisco scored the winning touchdown in the final minute. ***"I'll remember those forever because we were close to winning both. There's nothing like it. The intensity of the playoffs and the Super Bowl is just turned up another level. You experience that once and you just want to experience it over and over. I've been to two of them and I wouldn't mind another before I retire!"***

89

ANTHONY MUÑOZ 7 OF 9

When Anthony Muñoz was named to the 1992 Pro Bowl it was no surprise—because in each of the previous 10 years, Muñoz had represented the AFC in Honolulu. No man has played in more AFC-NFC Pro Bowls. ***"There are a lot of different awards in the NFL,"*** says Muñoz. ***"But what makes the Pro Bowl special is you've been voted in by the guys you're playing against."*** Of course, a week in Hawaii makes it nice, too. ***"But when you play the game, your eyes open wide. After a week on the beach, all of a sudden you've got to block Lawrence Taylor."***

Some of the toughest opponents Muñoz has faced were Lyle Alzado, Solomon Jakwer, Fred Dean, Joe Klecko, and Bruce Smith.

Front photo (from left): Howie Long, Michael Dean Perry, Tunch Ilkin, Warren Moon, Muñoz, and Max Montoya.

88

WEEK ONE

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	1	0	0
New England	1	0	0
N.Y. Jets	1	0	0
Indianapolis	0	1	0
Miami	0	1	0
AFC Central			
Houston	1	0	0
Pittsburgh	1	0	0
Cincinnati	0	1	0
Cleveland	0	1	0
AFC West			
Denver	1	0	0
Kansas City	1	0	0
L.A. Raiders	0	1	0
San Diego	0	1	0
Seattle	0	1	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Dallas	1	0	0
N.Y. Giants	1	0	0
Philadelphia	1	0	0
Phoenix	1	0	0
Washington	1	0	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	1	0	0
Detroit	0	1	0
Green Bay	0	1	0
Minnesota	0	1	0
Tampa Bay	0	1	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	1	0	0
Atlanta	0	1	0
L.A. Rams	0	1	0
San Francisco	0	1	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 35, Miami 31
Denver 45, Cincinnati 14
Houston 47, L.A. Raiders 17
New England 16, Indianapolis 7
Pittsburgh 26, San Diego 20

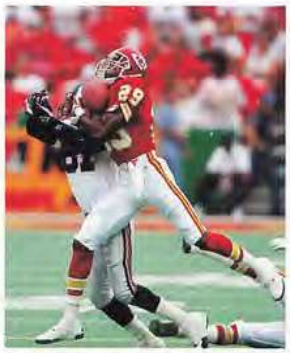
NFC
Chicago 10, Minnesota 6
N.Y. Giants 16, San Francisco 14
Philadelphia 20, Green Bay 3
Phoenix 24, L.A. Rams 14
Washington 45, Detroit 0

Interconference
Dallas 26, Cleveland 14
Kansas City 14, Atlanta 3
New Orleans 27, Seattle 24
N.Y. Jets 16, Tampa Bay 13

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Buffalo running back **Thurman Thomas** gained 268 total yards from scrimmage in the Bills' 35-31 victory over Miami, rushing for 165 yards and catching 8 passes for 103 more. He scored on a 50-yard pass play and a 7-yard run.

AFC DEFENSE—Kansas City cornerback **Albert Lewis** intercepted 3 passes, broke up another, and made 2 tackles to help the Chiefs stifle Atlanta 14-3.



Lewis robbed Atlanta blind.

Bill Mount

McMahon saved the Eagles.

Bruce Dierdorff

NFC OFFENSE—Philadelphia quarterback **Jim McMahon** replaced the injured Randall Cunningham in the second quarter of a scoreless game and passed for 257 yards and 2 touchdowns to lead the Eagles past the Packers 20-3.

NFC DEFENSE—Philadelphia end **Reggie White** made 8 tackles, including 3 sacks, forced 2 fumbles, recovered 1, broke up 2 passes, and had 2 quarterback hurries as the Eagles limited the Packers' offense to 228 yards.

the game with bruised ribs.

In Anaheim, the Phoenix Cardinals confronted the Rams without quarterback Timm Rosenbach, out for the year with a preseason knee injury, and leading rusher Johnny Johnson, out for the game with a foot injury.

The Rams helped by turning over the ball 7 times—5 fumbles—and the Cardinals won. All 24 Phoenix points were set up by turnovers, including linebacker Eric Hill's 85-yard touchdown return of a fumbled exchange between Rams center Tom Newberry and quarterback Jim Everett.

Meanwhile, new Phoenix quarterback Tom Tupa ran a cautious, turnover-free offense, which included his 28-yard touchdown pass to Ernie Jones and his 1-yard scoring run.

Marv Rubin

"I can't remember a more painful loss or a loss that angered me more," Rams head coach John Robinson said.

It was a depressing day for Seattle, too, as the Seahawks lost both a game—27-24 to New Orleans—and a quarterback, Dave Krieg, who broke the thumb on his passing hand. Doctors predicted Krieg would miss five to eight weeks.

New Orleans won the game on Bobby Hebert's 10-yard, fourth-down touchdown pass to Floyd Turner with 1:11 left. Seahawks wide receiver Brian Blades had a memorable day, catching 12 passes for 160 yards and 2 touchdowns.

Denver and Houston got off to impressive starts.

The Broncos shocked defending AFC Central-champion Cincinnati 45-14 as John Elway ran for 2 touchdowns and passed for 2 more. Former Rams running back Gaston Green ran for a career-high 116 yards, and cornerback Tyrone Braxton dashed 52 yards to score with an interception.

"This was as much fun as I've had in a game in a long time," Elway said.

The Oilers had fun in the Astrodome, too, running away from the AFC West-champion Raiders 47-17. Warren Moon passed for 2 touchdowns, and Allen Pinkett ran for 144 yards, including an 8-yard run for a touchdown.

Houston also scored 3 touchdowns following turnovers, including rookie cornerback Mike Dumas's 19-yard return of a fumbled kickoff.

Defending AFC-champion Buffalo started fast on offense, rolling up a team-record 582 yards with its no-huddle attack to outscore Miami 35-31.

Dan Marino threw 3 touchdown passes, including 2 to Mark Clayton, and 1990 Plan B free agent Mark Higgs ran for 146 yards and a score as the Dolphins took leads of 14-0 and 24-21.

But Buffalo's Jim Kelly shrugged off a sprained ankle to pass for a career-high 381 yards, including 54- and 50-yard touchdown bombs to Andre Reed and Thurman Thomas as he kept bringing Buffalo back. Thomas ran for 165 yards and caught 8 passes for 103 more.

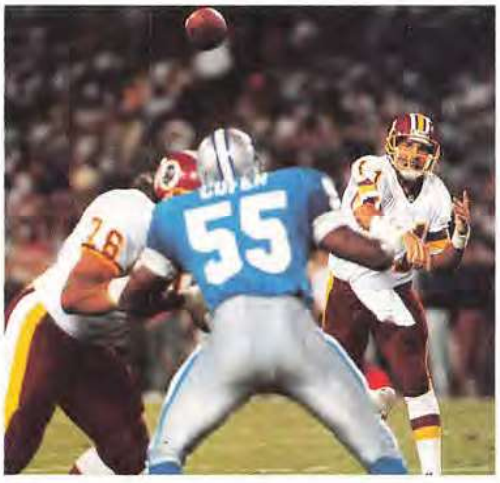
In Kansas City, Christian Okoye, attempting to erase memories of a disappointing 1990 season, ran for 143 yards and a touchdown to lead the Chiefs past Atlanta 14-3—the Falcons' nineteenth loss in a row on the road. Cornerback Albert Lewis helped out with 3 interceptions.

In Chicago, the Bears got their eighth successive opening-day victory with a gritty 10-6 win over Minnesota. Safety Markus Paul intercepted 2 passes, including one on the Chicago 11-yard line with 1:19 to play that clinched the victory ■

QUOTE

Bills quarterback Jim Kelly, on why he returned to the game after injuring his ankle against Miami:

"I didn't want anyone to think I'm a big pussycat."



Bill Wood

Calm, cool, and collected Mark Rypien completed 15 of 19 passes for 2 touchdowns as the Redskins swept away the Lions 45-0.

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WEEK 2

SEPTEMBER 8

Bills' Kelly Bedazzles Steelers With 6 Touchdown Passes; Oilers' Moon Takes Care of Bengals

In 1990, when Pittsburgh led the NFL in total defense, the Steelers allowed a league-low 9 touchdown passes.

In the second game of 1991, Buffalo's Jim Kelly threw *six* touchdown passes against the Steelers. When all the dust and passes had settled, the Bills had rolled to a 52-34 victory, their twelfth successive win at home.

Steelers Pro Bowl cornerback Rod Woodson was dazed, dazzled, and depressed.

"They made us look like little kids out there," he said.

While Buffalo was sending the Steelers back to a second childhood, Houston was just as impressive. The Oilers overpowered Cincinnati 30-7, which meant that in successive weeks they had defeated two defending division champions by a total of 53 points (the Raiders were 30-point victims on opening day).

After just two weeks, the Bills and Oilers were the only unbeaten teams left in the AFC. The NFC had four 2-0 teams—Chicago, Washington, New Orleans, and surprising Phoenix.

In Buffalo's explosion against the Steelers, Kelly completed 31 of 43 passes for 363 yards as the Bills became the first team in NFL history to surpass 500 yards in total offense in each of the first two weeks of a season. In all, Buffalo's no-huddle attack rolled up 537 yards on 85 plays (Pittsburgh had only 54 plays). Kelly got tired of calling signals.

"I ran out of plays," he said when he finally left the game. "It got to a point where it was, 'What do I call now?'"

Peter Brouillet

Buffalo rolled on behind Jim Kelly, who threw a club-record 6 touchdown passes in his team's 52-34 victory over Pittsburgh. Kelly passed for 363 yards.

Four of Kelly's touchdown passes went to third-year wide receiver Don Beebe (for 34, 14, 11, and 4 yards)—to equal the club record—the last 2 coming in the fourth quarter after the Steelers had cut Buffalo's early lead to 31-27. Thurman Thomas took the pressure off Kelly all day by running for 107 yards on 15 carries, his second 100-yard game.

In defeat, Pittsburgh's Barry Foster rushed for 121 yards, scoring on a 56-yard run.

Meanwhile, the Oilers went into Cincinnati, where they had lost their last 4 games by an average of 31 points. But Warren Moon passed for 315 yards and a touchdown and Allen Pinkett ran for 101 yards, including a 31-yard touchdown dash, as Houston breezed to the victory.

QUOTE

Rams head coach John Robinson, asked why he went for a touchdown on fourth-and-inches at the Giants' goal line (running back Robert Delpino scored):

"My team would've beaten the hell out of me if we didn't go for it."

Marv Rubin

Houston linebacker Lamar Lathon broke the game open with a 52-yard, fourth-quarter interception return for a score after the ball skipped off wide receiver Tim McGee's hands. After two games, the defending AFC Central Division-champion Bengals were winless.

"For whatever reason—and I can't explain it—we're in a funk," Cincinnati quarterback Boomer Esiason said.

One team not in a funk was Phoenix, which pulled off its second successive upset. The Cardinals were outgained, had the ball 18 fewer plays, made fewer first downs, and were 0-for-10 on third-down

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

Scott Cunningham

Lohmiller bombed the Cowboys.

AFC OFFENSE—Buffalo quarterback **Jim Kelly** passed for 363 yards and a club-record 6 touchdowns as the Bills outscored Pittsburgh 52-34. Don Beebe tied another club record by catching 4 of Kelly's touchdown passes, while James Lofton and Andre Reed each caught 1.
AFC DEFENSE—Houston linebacker **Lamar Lathon** made 5 tackles and returned an interception 52 yards for a touchdown in the Oilers' 30-7 rout of Cincinnati.

NFC OFFENSE—Washington kicker **Chip Lohmiller** boomed four long field goals (53, 52, 45, and 46 yards) as the Redskins stopped Dallas 33-31.
NFC DEFENSE—Chicago linebacker **John Roper** had 11 tackles, including 2 of his team's 7 sacks, and broke up a pass to help the Bears hold off Tampa Bay 21-20. Nine of Roper's tackles were solos.

Michael Heinz

No one caught Lathon.

conversions in Philadelphia, yet they beat the Eagles 26-10.

Phoenix won the game by forcing 6 turnovers, which set up 17 points and stopped three Eagles' drives. This latest outbreak of thievery gave defensive coordinator Fritz Shurmur's unit 13 turnovers in the two games.

"That's not by accident," head coach Joe Bugel said. "We're a heckuva hitting football team. We're causing a lot of wrecks out there, and the ball's coming out."

Chief wrecker of the Eagles was linebacker Freddie Joe Nunn, who sacked Jim McMahon to force a fumble that end Rod Saddler carried 7 yards for a touchdown, forced another fumble that was recovered in the Cardinals' end zone, and recovered still another fumble in the Cardinals' end zone.

In Kansas City, the Saints held off the Chiefs 17-10 on 2 Bobby Hebert touchdown passes to open a season 2-0 for the first time in the franchise's 25-year history.

It was an odd game. The Saints outscored the Chiefs 17-0 in the first half and outgained them 235-30. Kansas City won the second half 10-0 with a 242-24 edge in yardage.

The Redskins also won on the road, outfighting inspired Dallas 33-31 on Monday night with help from a courageous call suggested to head coach Joe Gibbs by special teams coach Wayne Sevier.

Trailing 24-23 late in the third quarter, Gibbs faked a punt and went for a first down on fourth-and-1 from his 48. Brian Mitchell, the blocking back in punt formation, took the snap from center like a quarterback and ran 3 yards for a first down. With 12:58 left in the game, Gerald Riggs ended the 85-yard drive with a 1-yard scoring run.

The Redskins also got 101 rushing yards from Earnest Byner, while Mark Rypien passed for 203 and 2 touchdowns as Washington snapped its six-game Monday night losing streak.

"I'm thrilled to get over that Monday night thing," Gibbs said. "Now we can quit talking and worrying about it."

Gibbs did some worrying in the second quarter when Dallas jumped to a 21-10 lead. In all, the improved Cowboys got 3 touchdown passes from Troy Aikman, while Emmitt Smith ran for 112 yards, 75 of them on a first-quarter touchdown run.

Another traveling team won when the Los Angeles Rams surprised the Giants 19-13 as new starting running back Robert Delpino rushed for 116 yards and a touchdown, and Tony Zendejas kicked 4 field goals.

In San Francisco, the 49ers rebounded from their last-second loss to the Giants by riddling the Chargers 34-14. Steve Young passed for 3 touchdowns and 348 yards, hooking up with Jerry Rice on 32- and 70-yard scoring plays.

In Atlanta, the Vikings snapped their 11-game "outdoor" losing streak with a 20-19 victory over the Falcons. Herschel Walker ran for 125 yards on 25 carries.

New Cleveland head coach Bill Belichick earned his first victory as the Browns won at New England 20-0. Bernie Kosar passed for 2 touchdowns, including a 65-yard bomb to rookie wide receiver Michael Jackson. ■

HIGGS'S TOUGHEST OPPONENT CARRIED AN AX—OR, RUNNING SCARED IN MIAMI

When the season began, Miami running back Mark Higgs was happy just to survive the final cut. Two weeks later, he was the NFL's second-leading rusher.

The 5-foot, 7-inch, 195-pound Higgs, playing with his third team in four years, was probably the most surprising player in the league in the first two weeks.

With Sammie Smith, Miami's leading rusher in 1990, on injured reserve with a preseason knee injury, Higgs moved into the starting lineup and rushed for 146 and 111 yards against Buffalo and Indianapolis, respectively. His two-game total of 257 yards was 6 more than the 251 yards he gained in his first three *years* in the NFL.

"The things that have happened to Higgy are the things that make you feel good about being a coach," Miami's Don Shula said after his little back helped beat the Colts 17-6. "He's a guy who works and perseveres, and when the opportunity comes, he takes it and runs with it—literally."

Higgs was a surprise star for Miami.

Robert B. Shaver

The first Dolphin to rush for 100 yards in back-to-back games in nine years, Higgs came to Miami as a Plan B free agent in 1990 after undistinguished seasons in Dallas (1988) and Philadelphia (1989). He would like to stick around the NFL for a while.

"A guy like me is always on the edge, fighting for a job," he said after his 146-yard outburst against the Bills. "I was real close to getting cut just a couple of weeks ago. I've always been running scared—not of the defense, but of the ax."

Dan Honda

Steve Young passed for 3 touchdowns, including 2 to Jerry Rice, as the 49ers flew past the Chargers.

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	2	0	0
Miami	1	1	0
New England	1	1	0
N.Y. Jets	1	1	0
Indianapolis	0	2	0
AFC Central			
Houston	2	0	0
Cleveland	1	1	0
Pittsburgh	1	1	0
Cincinnati	0	2	0
AFC West			
Denver	1	1	0
Kansas City	1	1	0
L.A. Raiders	1	1	0
Seattle	1	1	0
San Diego	0	2	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Phoenix	2	0	0
Washington	2	0	0
Dallas	1	1	0
N.Y. Giants	1	1	0
Philadelphia	1	1	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	2	0	0
Detroit	1	1	0
Minnesota	1	1	0
Green Bay	0	2	0
Tampa Bay	0	2	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	2	0	0
L.A. Rams	1	1	0
San Francisco	1	1	0
Atlanta	0	2	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 52, Pittsburgh 34
Cleveland 20, New England 0
Houston 30, Cincinnati 7
L.A. Raiders 16, Denver 13
Miami 17, Indianapolis 6
Seattle 20, N.Y. Jets 13
NFC
Chicago 21, Tampa Bay 20
Detroit 23, Green Bay 14
L.A. Rams 19, N.Y. Giants 13
Minnesota 20, Atlanta 19
Phoenix 20, Philadelphia 10
Washington 33, Dallas 31
Interconference
New Orleans 17, Kansas City 10
San Francisco 34, San Diego 14

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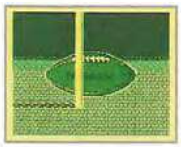

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WEEK 3

SEPTEMBER 15

There's Nothing Like Waiting 'Til Last Minute...and That's When Six Teams Manage to Pull Off Victories

With time running out on a hot, humid day, players on both sides knelt on the ground to catch their breath between plays. A football war was about to go into overtime.

The Bears led the Giants 20-17 with only 15 seconds left, and New York's Matt Bahr, one of the most reliable kickers in the NFL, was lining up to try a 35-yard field goal.

Bears defensive tackle William (Refrigerator) Perry would have none of that. As the ball was kicked, Perry jumped and swatted it down with his right hand—and the Bears had survived to remain unbeaten.

"He's the tallest guy on the team, you know," Bears head coach Mike Ditka joked. "It hit him right in the stomach."

Many of the coaches in the league must have had nervous stomachs in week 3—this was just one of six games decided in the last minute of play, five of them in the last 22 seconds.

Unbeaten Buffalo barely survived, edging the Jets 23-20 when New York's Pat Leahy was short on a 51-yard field-goal attempt with 16 seconds left. And Atlanta, Cleveland, Green Bay, and Denver also won or held on in the final minute.

In Chicago, the Bears, still smarting from a 31-3 mugging by the Giants in the 1990 playoffs, took a 13-0 halftime lead, helped by Jim Harbaugh's 75-yard connection with Wendell Davis on a touchdown-pass play. But the Giants stormed back in the second half to score 17 successive points.

Jim Turner

The Bears congratulated William Perry for his blocked field goal with 10 seconds left that saved their hard-fought victory over the Giants.

With 6:39 left in the game, the Bears regained the lead when Neal Anderson, getting a key block from wide receiver Tom Waddle, ran 42 yards down the left sideline and dived into the end zone from the 5-yard line for a touchdown. Anderson originally was ruled out of bounds at the 5, but the call on the field was reversed by instant replay.

Perry's winning block came with 10 seconds left, leaving the Bears elated and the defending Super Bowl-champion Giants with a 1-2 record.

Just as unhappy as the Giants were the 49ers, who also fell to 1-2—for the first time since 1982—after they lost to the revitalized Vikings 17-14.

Minnesota scored all 17 points in the second quarter, including Anthony Carter's remarkable 46-yard catch-and-run on which he took a short pass from Wade Wilson, bounced off safety Johnnie Jackson at the 49ers' 30, put his hand on the ground to keep his balance, and ran to a touchdown.

Like the Bears, the Bills were in a desperate struggle as the Jets, controlling the ball for 40 minutes, 35 seconds, led 20-16 late in the fourth quarter. Leahy already had kicked 2 field goals, and Ken O'Brien had directed time-consuming touchdown drives of 85 and 80 yards.

With time running out, Buffalo came marching back, scoring the game-winning touchdown with 4:14 left on Jim Kelly's 15-yard pass to running back Thurman Thomas, who made an acrobatic catch in the end zone. After that, the Bills had to sweat out Leahy's last-minute field-goal attempt.

"We were scared," Bills wide receiver James Lofton said. "We thought they were going to steal the game from us."

Lofton, who contributed to the victory with 5 catches for 79 yards, moved into second place on the all-time NFL list with 12,197 receiving yards.

Three other teams joined the Bears and Bills with 3-0 records. Washington and New Orleans matched Chicago in the NFC, and Houston matched Buffalo in the AFC.

Phoenix came to Washington with its own 2-0 record, but the Cardinals, playing their third successive game on the road, were overwhelmed. The Redskins ran, passed, and defended brilliantly to win 34-0. Two weeks earlier, they had beaten Detroit 45-0 in Washington.

The Redskins' Earnest Byner rushed for 109 yards, caught 4 passes for 51 yards, and scored a touchdown. Linebacker Wilber Marshall intercepted 2 passes, returning the second 54 yards for a touchdown.

The Saints, 3-0 for the first time in franchise history, sacked Jim Everett 5 times, held him to 71 passing yards, and throttled the Rams 24-7. Los Angeles, its offensive line weakened by injuries,

Marv Rubin

QUOTE

Denver quarterback John Elway on Seattle's fourth-quarter pass rush:

"We got ahead and they started bringing everybody on every play. One time, I thought I saw [head coach] Chuck Knox."

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	3	0	0
Miami	1	2	0
New England	1	2	0
N.Y. Jets	1	2	0
Indianapolis	0	3	0
AFC Central			
Houston	3	0	0
Cleveland	2	1	0
Pittsburgh	2	1	0
Cincinnati	0	3	0
AFC West			
Denver	2	1	0
L.A. Raiders	2	1	0
Kansas City	1	2	0
Seattle	1	2	0
San Diego	0	3	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	3	0	0
Philadelphia	2	1	0
Phoenix	2	1	0
Dallas	1	2	0
N.Y. Giants	1	2	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	3	0	0
Detroit	2	1	0
Minnesota	2	1	0
Green Bay	1	2	0
Tampa Bay	0	3	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	3	0	0
Atlanta	1	2	0
L.A. Rams	1	2	0
San Francisco	1	2	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 23, N. Y Jets 20
Cleveland 14, Cincinnati 13
Denver 16, Seattle 10
Houston 17, Kansas City 7
L.A. Raiders 16, Indianapolis 0
Pittsburgh 20, New England 6

NFC
Chicago 20, N.Y. Giants 17
Green Bay 15, Tampa Bay 13
Minnesota 17, San Francisco 14
New Orleans 24, L.A. Rams 7
Philadelphia 24, Dallas 0
Washington 34, Phoenix 0

Interconference
Atlanta 13, San Diego 10
Detroit 17, Miami 13

THE BALL STOPS HERE—FOR SIX POINTS

If an award were given for play of the week, the honor in week 3 would have gone to the shortest punt return for a touchdown in NFL history.

It went *zero* yards and gave Pittsburgh wide receiver Ernie Mills his first NFL score.

Mills's run to glory all began with New England backed up to its own 1-yard line with less than four minutes left. The Steelers led 13-6, but the Patriots, still hoping to get the ball back, sent Bryan Wagner in to punt.

George Gojkovich

Ernie Mills didn't have to go far to score a touchdown for the Steelers.

Perched at the very back of the end zone, Wagner found himself only 11 yards from the line of scrimmage, instead of the usual 15. He also found himself in a crowded end zone, because Eugene Lockhart was there as a blocker.

Wagner caught the snap, Lockhart backed up to block, Wagner punted...and the ball thudded into Lockhart's left thigh.

From Lockhart, it caromed off another Patriot, linebacker Johnny Rembert, toward Mills, who was streaking in from the Steelers' left side. Mills caught the ball in the end zone—and then admitted he wasn't sure what it all meant.

"I forgot it was a touchdown," Mills, a rookie, said later. "I thought it was a safety. Then I thought, 'No, it's a touchdown.'"

Although it was a touchdown, it was not a blocked punt because no member of the defense had blocked the ball. It officially was listed as a punt return.

The Steelers went on to win 20-6, collecting their only "normal" touchdown on Bubby Brister's 32-yard pass to tight end Eric Green.

The score was 7-7 in the third quarter when Warren Moon directed a 93-yard scoring drive that ended with his 4-yard strike to Haywood Jeffires for the winning touchdown.

In Detroit, Miami's Don Shula was attempting to win his 300th game, but the Lions staged a dramatic goal-line stand to frustrate him and the Dolphins 17-13.

Miami nose tackle Shawn Lee had intercepted a pass to give the Dolphins a first down on the Detroit 3 with 4:42 left. On fourth down from the 5, Dan Marino zipped a pass to Tony Martin in the end zone.

Shadowing Martin, however, was cornerback Ray Crockett, who slapped the pass away. Detroit took possession with 2:58 remaining in the game and ran out the clock.

"When the ball was in the air, I'm thinking, 'Six points,'" Martin said. "I don't know how he got his hand in."

Detroit's Barry Sanders got his feet in, triggering the Lions' offense by rushing for 143 yards.

In San Diego, the Falcons finally snapped their 19-game losing streak on the road, but they needed a little luck. San Diego's John Carney, who made 19-of-21 field goals in 1990, missed one from 47 yards with five seconds left to preserve the Falcons' 13-10 victory.

Steve Broussard gave the Falcons an offensive boost by rushing for 101 yards.

In Cleveland, Plan B free agent Matt Stover kicked a 45-yard field goal with four seconds left—his fourth three-pointer of the game—to boost the Browns past the winless Bengals 14-13. Safety Vince Newsome, another Plan B free agent, set up 2 of the field goals with fumble recoveries.

In Green Bay, the Packers snapped their seven-game regular-season losing streak by beating Tampa Bay 15-13 on Chris Jacke's 22-yard field goal with 22 seconds left. Don Majkowski set up the winning kick with a 35-yard pass to Perry Kemp after throwing an 8-yard touchdown pass to Vince Workman with 2:03 remaining.

Things went from bad to worse for the winless Indianapolis Colts, who were shut out by the Raiders 16-0 while losing four-time Pro Bowl center Ray Donaldson for the season with a broken leg. The previous week, the Colts had lost running back Albert Bentley, their leading receiver in 1990, for the season with a knee injury. ■

managed just 120 total yards and 6 first downs.

"We've got a hard-nosed team," Saints linebacker Rickey Jackson said. "We go out and play hard, clean, butt-'em-in-the-mouth football."

Craig (Ironhead) Heyward rushed for 72 yards and 2 touchdowns, while Gill Fenerty came off the bench to run for 81 yards, all in the second half.

In Houston, the Oilers also started 3-0 for the first time as they outfought Kansas City 17-7. It was Houston's third consecutive victory over a 1990 playoff team.

Joe Patronite

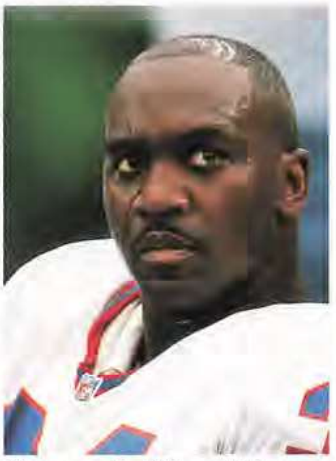
PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Minnesota wide receiver **Anthony Carter** caught 3 passes for 71 yards, including one for 46 yards and a touchdown, and ran 2 reverses for 41 more yards to help the Vikings trim the 49ers 17-14.

Simmons and his teammates gave Troy Aikman nightmares.

NFC DEFENSE—Eagles end **Clyde Simmons** and Packers linebacker **Bryce Paup** each had 4½ sacks to share player-of-the-week honors. Simmons, who had 9 total tackles and a forced fumble, led a fierce rush that sacked Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman a club-record 11 times in Philadelphia's 24-0 victory over Dallas. Paup had 7 total tackles and scored a safety with his end-zone sack of Vinny Testaverde as Green Bay edged Tampa Bay 15-13.

AFC OFFENSE—Buffalo's **Thurman Thomas** caught a club-record 13 passes, including the game-winner of 15 yards from Jim Kelly, as the Bills trimmed the Jets 23-20. Thomas had 62 yards rushing and 112 receiving.



Bill Cummings

Thomas caught a Bills-record 13 passses for 112 yards.

AFC DEFENSE—Denver safety **Steve Atwater** made 10 tackles, intercepted a pass, and recovered a fumble to set up a field goal in the Broncos' 16-10 victory over Seattle.

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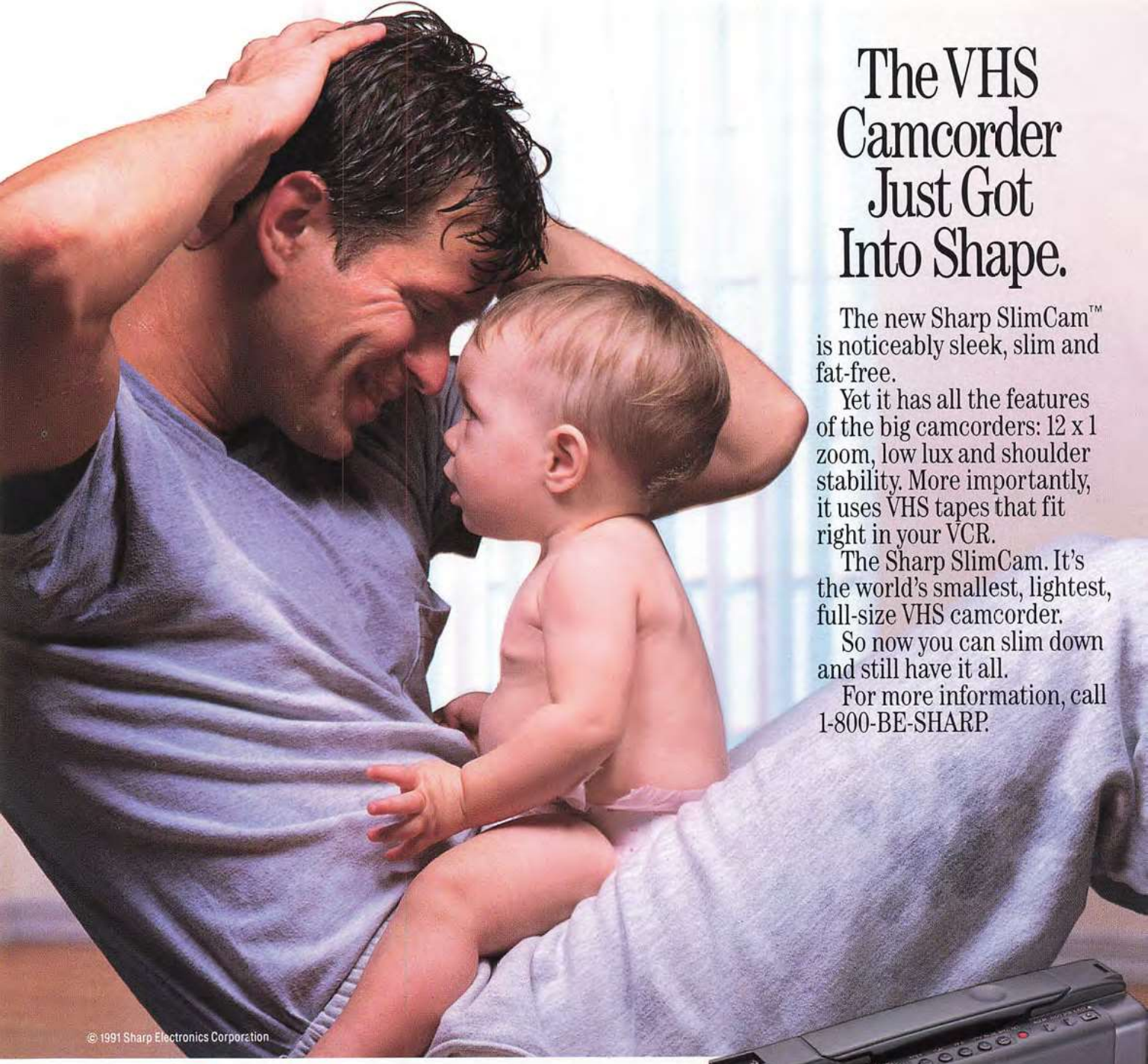

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WEEK

SEPTEMBER 22

Vikings Turned Into 26-0 Wreck at Hands of Unbeaten Saints; Oilers Drained by Patriots

Minnesota head coach Jerry Burns sounded like a guy who had been in a car wreck. He didn't know what hit him

"They just overwhelmed us," Burns said of the New Orleans Saints. "We tried to go outside, inside...you name it. We never came up with a play of any consequence, offensively or defensively."

Burns and his Vikings had beaten the Saints by an average margin of 30 points in their last four meetings. But this time, New Orleans, one of the NFL's four unbeaten teams, threw a suffocating defense at its old nemesis and won 26-0.

Joining the Saints at 4-0 after four weeks were the Redskins and Bears in the NFC and Buffalo in the AFC. Houston, the other previously unbeaten team, was surprised 24-20 by New England.

No team was more impressive than New Orleans, which got 4 field goals from Morten Andersen, 72 yards rushing and 2 touchdowns from Craig Heyward, and 106 yards rushing by Gill Fenerty to subdue the Vikings.

Meanwhile, the Saints' defense, which didn't yield a touchdown for the second successive week, held the Vikings to 6 first downs and 151 yards, set up 13 points with turnovers, and limited Herschel Walker to 15 yards on 10 carries.

"This might have been our best performance ever as a defense and as a linebacker corps," said linebacker Sam Mills, who had 11 tackles, an interception, and a forced fumble.

Greg McMurtry's 34-yard touchdown catch-and run with six seconds left-gave New England a shocking 24-20 victory over unbeaten Houston.

Arthur Anderson

It wasn't nearly as easy for the Bears, who twice escaped almost certain defeat—at the end of regulation and again in overtime—to squeeze by the luckless New York Jets 19-13. The Bears won their first four games by a total of 14 points.

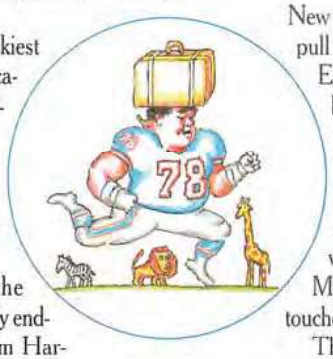
"We may be the luckiest team in the world," Chicago's Mike Ditka said, celebrating his 100th victory as a head coach. "I don't know if it's luck, or divine intervention, or what."

Whatever it was, the Monday night game finally ended when quarterback Jim Harbaugh squirmed over the goal line from six inches out with 18 seconds left in overtime. Harbaugh had been called back to the field after he and everyone else had run off, thinking the game had ended on the quarterback's apparent 23-yard scoring pass to tight end Cap Boso. But instant replay showed Boso came up a half-yard short and reversed the touchdown call.

The Bears barely made it to overtime in the first place. With 1:54 remaining in regulation, the Jets, who had played inspired defense, were leading 13-6 and trying to run out the clock. But Blair Thomas, who rushed for 125 yards, was stripped of the ball by tackle Steve McMichael, who recovered at the New York 36.

Ten plays later—on the last play of regulation— Harbaugh passed 6 yards to running back Neal Anderson, who made a difficult catch for the touchdown that tied the score (after Kevin Butler's conversion).

The Bears escaped again in overtime, when 18-year veteran Pat Leahy hooked a 28-yard field-goal attempt wide left with 3:50 to go. The week before, Leahy had been short on a 51-yard try with 16 seconds left as the Jets lost to unbeaten Buffalo 23-20.



QUOTE

Houston tackle Don Maggs, asked what he planned to do during the upcoming bye week:

"We get 48 whole hours off? I think I'll take my family to Africa on a safari."

New York may have failed to pull off an upset, but New England came up with a big one, stunning the Oilers 24-20 on Hugh Millen's 34-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Greg McMurtry with 6 seconds left. It was McMurtry's first NFL touchdown.

The Patriots led 17-6 going into the fourth quarter, but Houston quarterback Warren Moon threw 35- and 5-yard touchdown passes to Curtis Duncan—the last with 1:52 left—for a 20-17 lead. Millen retaliated with an 83-yard drive to the winning score that snapped New England's 10-game losing streak at home.

"Isn't that amazing?" Patriots coach Dick MacPherson said. "I don't feel too badly for Houston because they were 3-0. We needed to win."

In Cincinnati the 0-3 Bengals also needed to win, and they rallied for 17 consecutive points, helped by Craig Taylor's 2 rushing touchdowns,

Marv Rubin

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

Dave Silverman

Cook frustrated Houston.

AFC OFFENSE—New England tight end **Marv Cook** caught 10 passes for 99 yards, including a 13-yard scoring pass from running back **Jon Vaughn,** to help the Patriots shock unbeaten Houston 24-20.

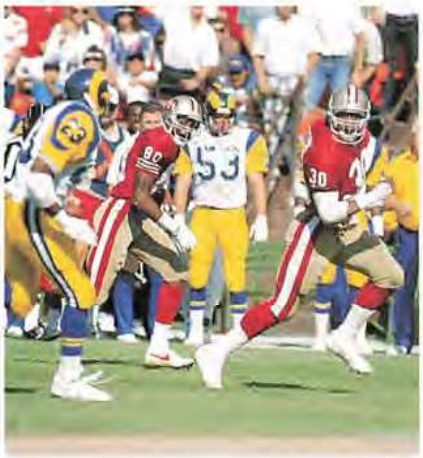
AFC DEFENSE—Buffalo linebacker **Cornelius Bennett** made 10 tackles, including 2 sacks and 2 other tackles for a loss, as the unbeaten Bills held off Tampa Bay 17-10.

NFC OFFENSE—Dallas running back **Emmitt Smith** rushed for 182 yards, including touchdown runs of 60 and 12 yards, in the Cowboys' 17-9 conquest of Phoenix.

NFC DEFENSE—Atlanta cornerback **Deion Sanders** forced a fumble that was returned for a touchdown, intercepted a pass, and helped the Falcons hold the Raiders to just 87 passing yards in a 21-17 victory.

Bill Mount

Sanders had a big day.



Dan Honda

Jerry Rice (80) broke open the 49ers' victory over the Rams with this 62-yard touchdown play. He was escorted by running back Keith Henderson (30).

to tie unbeaten Washington 27-27 in the fourth quarter.

But the Redskins stormed 53 yards on six running plays—three by Earnest Byner and three by Gerald Riggs—for the winning touchdown and a 34-27 victory. Riggs scored 3 touchdowns, including his 7-yard game winner with 2:02 remaining.

"This really stinks," said quarterback Boomer Esiason of the 0-4 Bengals.

The Rams still were scratching their heads about how to tackle Jerry Rice. They trailed San Francisco only 13-10 in the fourth quarter when Rice caught Steve Young's 5-yard pass, broke a tackle by cornerback Sammy Lilly, eluded defensive tackle Robert Young, and went 62 yards to score. For good measure, he carried safety Michael Stewart the final 3 yards into the end zone, and San Francisco went on to win 27-10.

"He may be the greatest receiver of all time," Rams head coach John Robinson said.

Just as hard to catch was Detroit's Barry Sanders, who darted for 179 yards and 2 touchdowns, leading the Lions to a 33-24 victory over Indianapolis, their third consecutive win.

The Colts' Eric Dickerson ran for a touchdown and caught a short scoring pass from Jeff George, but he also was held to a career-low 17 yards on 13 carries and tackled for a safety by nose tackle Jerry Ball. Still, Dickerson sneaked past Franco Harris to move into fourth place on the NFL's career rushing list with 12,121 yards.

While the Lions built a 3-1 record, so did improved Denver, which rode the flying feet of Gaston Green to a 27-19 victory over San Diego. Green, traded to the Broncos by the Rams in the offseason, rushed for 127 yards and scored on 5-, 63-, and 20-yard runs. They were the first rushing touchdowns of his NFL career.

Denver led 13-12 early in the fourth quarter, when Green dashed 63 yards to score. When the Chargers closed to 20-19, he put the game away with his 20-yard touchdown run with 2:46 left.

The Eagles got a boost from another Green—34-year-old wide receiver Roy Green, who replaced injured Calvin Williams and caught 6 passes for 114 yards to help Philadelphia stop Pittsburgh 23-14. Traded by Phoenix in the offseason, cut by Cleveland in the preseason, and turned down by the Redskins in a tryout earlier in the week, Green signed with the Eagles the week before the game.

"He was just what the doctor ordered," Eagles coach Rich Kotite said.

So was Jim McMahon, who passed for 286 yards and dived a yard for a touchdown.

In Atlanta, the brash, young Falcons, trying to prove they were tougher than the Raiders, scored on the third play of the game and went on to upend Los Angeles 21-17. Cornerback Deion Sanders triggered the quick touchdown when he sacked Jay Schroeder and shook loose the ball, which was picked up by linebacker Jessie Tuggle and carried 18 yards into the end zone.

The Falcons also got 25- and 46-yard touchdown passes from Chris Miller to Steve Broussard and Michael Haynes.

"I think the real bad boys prevailed," Sanders said. ■

James V. Biever

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	4	0	0	Washington	4	0	0
Miami	2	2	0	Philadelphia	3	1	0
New England	2	2	0	Dallas	2	2	0
N.Y. Jets	1	3	0	N.Y. Giants	2	2	0
Indianapolis	0	4	0	Phoenix	2	2	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	3	1	0	Chicago	4	0	0
Cleveland	2	2	0	Detroit	3	1	0
Pittsburgh	2	2	0	Minnesota	2	2	0
Cincinnati	0	4	0	Green Bay	1	3	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	0	4	0
Denver	3	1	0	NFC West			
Kansas City	2	2	0	New Orleans	4	0	0
L.A. Raiders	2	2	0	Atlanta	2	2	0
Seattle	1	3	0	San Francisco	2	2	0
San Diego	0	4	0	L.A. Rams	1	3	0

Scores

AFC

Denver 27, San Diego 19
Kansas City 20, Seattle 13
New England 24, Houston 20

NFC

Dallas 17, Phoenix 9
New Orleans 26, Minnesota 0
San Francisco 27, L.A. Rams 10

Interconference

Atlanta 21, L.A. Raiders 17
Buffalo 17, Tampa Bay 10
Chicago 19, N.Y. Jets 13 (OT)
Washington 34, Cincinnati 27
Detroit 33, Indianapolis 24
Miami 16, Green Bay 13
N.Y. Giants 13, Cleveland 10
Philadelphia 23, Pittsburgh 14

DON SHULA—STILL WINNING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

The first time he stood on the sideline for the Baltimore Colts in 1963, Don Shula was 33, the youngest head coach in NFL history.

Twenty-eight years later, at 61, he still was making history.

On a warm, humid day in Miami, Shula became only the second NFL coach to win 300 games when he directed the Dolphins to a 16-13 victory over Green Bay. On such a momentous occasion, the Dolphins celebrated by dousing him in ice water.

A drenched Shula got number 300.

"It was cold, but I enjoyed it," the coach said with a smile.

His record now at 300-139-6, Shula typically was looking ahead.

"I'm glad it [the 300th win] is in the can, but it won't be one I'll pull out and look at a lot," he said. "We're 2-2, and we know we have to play a hell of a lot better than we did today."

To reach 300 victories, Shula went 73-26-4 with the Colts (1963-69), and, since 1970, had posted a 227-113-2 record with the Dolphins. His career winning percentage (.681) was the best among the NFL's 10 winningest coaches, and he remains the only person to coach in six Super Bowls.

To put 300 victories in perspective, note that Shula has won more games than 16 NFL franchises. In addition, only five NFL head coaches, counting Shula, have won more than 200 games.

The only man in front of the Miami coach is the late George Halas, who took 325 victories to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"That would be a record I would like to hold someday," he admitted in an interview with *USA Today*. "But only if the wins come within the framework of productive, enjoyable seasons. I wouldn't hang around just to get the record."

He said, however, that he had more important things to worry about than catching Halas.

"I never really spend much time thinking long-range," he said. "I don't know what good it does. The important thing is the next game."

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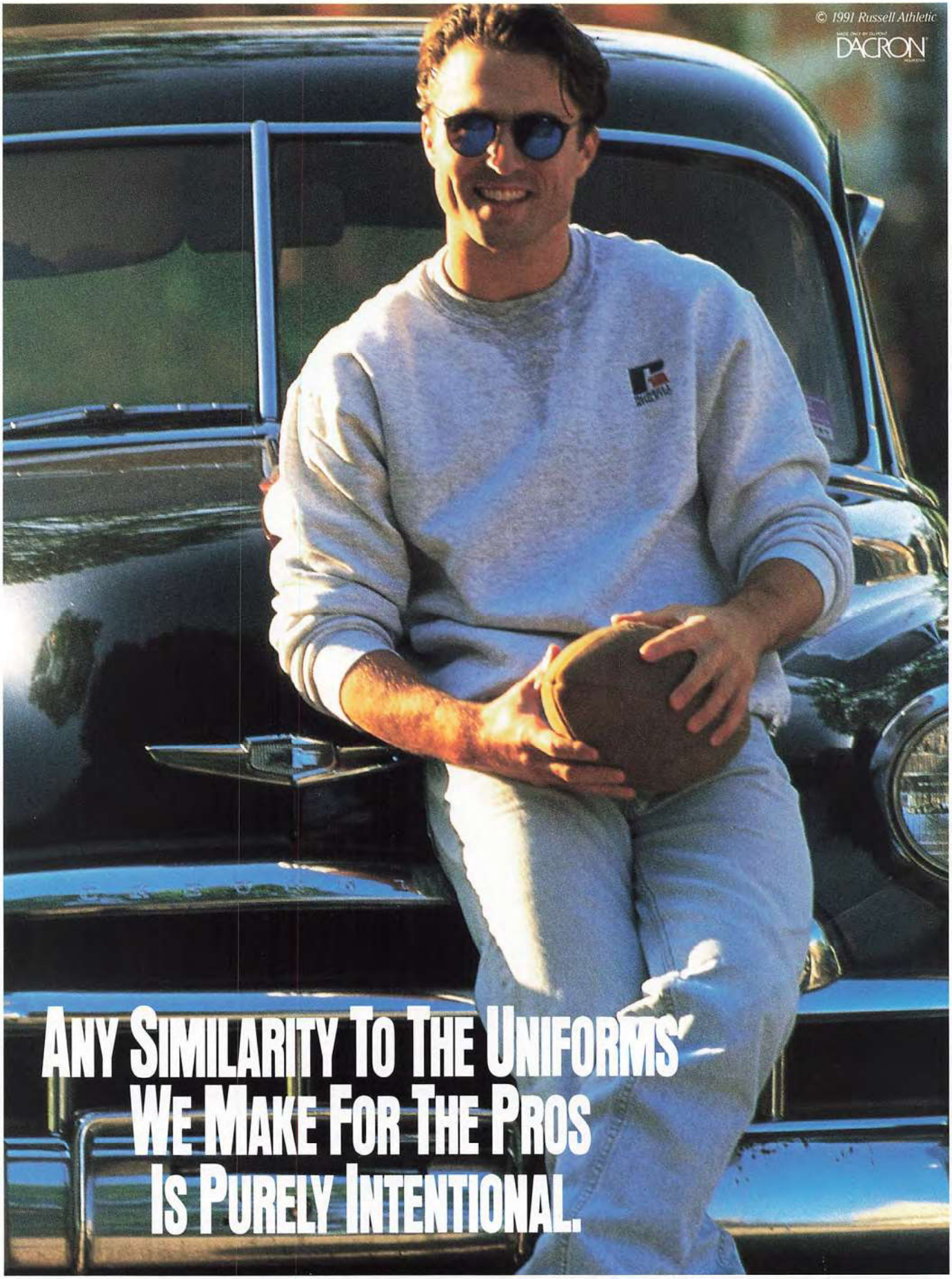

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WEEK 5

SEPTEMBER 29

Bears Miss Chances and Bills Roll On to 5-0; Saints Making History With Every Victory

It was a good lesson for every team in the NFL—if you want to beat Buffalo, don't squander opportunities.

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon in week 5, the Bears dominated the Bills for most of the first 29 minutes, but led just 6-0 after having 2 touchdowns nullified by penalties.

Quicker than you can say Jim Kelly, the lead evaporated.

With just 12 seconds remaining before halftime, Kelly, the NFL's leading passer after five weeks, hit backup wide receiver Al Edwards with a 33-yard touchdown pass—and the Bills went on to win 35-20 in the early season battle of unbeatens.

"We didn't do too well in the first half, but our defense kept us in there," Buffalo running back Thurman Thomas said. "Then we got a big lift from that late TD."

Big lift indeed. The Bills went on to score touchdowns on their first two series of the second half for a 21-6 lead and never trailed again.

So, as September slipped into history, Buffalo rolled on at 5-0, joining Washington and New Orleans as the only NFL teams with perfect records. The Bills were particularly tough at home, winning their thirteenth in a row at Rich Stadium.

Kelly passed for 303 yards and 3 touchdowns against Chicago, including a 77-yard scoring strike to James Lofton. The 35-year-old Lofton caught 4 passes to give him 665 receptions in his career and move him to fourth on the NFL's all-time receiving list. Thomas ran for 117 yards and a touchdown, while tight end Butch Rolle caught a 2-yard scoring pass—his tenth consecutive catch for a touchdown.

Included in the 2 Bears touchdowns wiped out by penalties was a 43-yard interception return by safety Mark Carrier.

"We self-destructed almost every chance we got," Bears head coach Mike Ditka said.

David Draplin

Al Edwards (85) gave the Bills their first lead over Chicago with a touchdown catch late in the second quarter.

FOR THE LIONS, IT'S GOODBY PURR, HELLO ROAR!

The last time Detroit started this fast, running back Barry Sanders was 12 years old. In 1980, the club opened with a 5-1 record on the way to a second-place finish at 9-7.

Eleven years later, Detroit fans were smiling again. The Lions' 31-3 victory over Tampa Bay was their fourth win in a row, and, at 4-1, they were tied with the Bears for first place in the NFC Central Divison.

The team was playing it cool, however—refusing to forget a 45-0 loss to Washington in the first game of the season.

"I feel good, but I'm not going home to have a parade," said linebacker Chris Spielman, the team's leading tackler. "We're right on track, but we haven't qualified for anything yet."

"We aren't going to get to the playoffs with four wins," quarterback Rodney Peete said. "We have to take it up another notch."

Playing with rib and hip injuries that restricted him to two days of practice, Peete passed for 159 yards and a touchdown against Tampa Bay, but also gave the ball to Sanders 27 times.

The third-year running back knew what to do with it, running for 160 yards and 3 touchdowns, including a career-long 69-yard scoring dash. In four games—he missed the loss to Washington with bruised ribs—Sanders had run for an NFL-leading 524 yards. He had three 100-yard games in a row.

Barry Sanders led Lions and NFL.

Betsy Peabody Rowe

Also on a four-game streak was wide receiver Willie Green, an eighth-round draft choice in 1990, whose 26-yard touchdown catch against the Buccaneers gave him a reception for a touchdown in each of the last four games.

Peete, Sanders, Green, and Spielman were typical Lions—young draft choices. In fact, Detroit started just one player in his 30s against Tampa Bay.

"I wouldn't trade this young team for anybody's," head coach Wayne Fontes said.

"We're maturing day by day. This team will be better next year than it is right now."

New Orleans wasn't self-destructing. The Saints stifled Atlanta with their fierce defense to finish September unbeaten for the first time in franchise history.

In winning 27-6, the Saints bottled up the Falcons, allowing just 8 first downs and 162 yards and never allowing Atlanta to advance past the New Orleans 44. It was the third successive game in which the Saints shut out the opposing offense. The Falcons scored on a fumble return.

"They're as good as everybody says they are," Atlanta head coach Jerry Glanville said.

Bobby Hebert continued his fine play at quarterback for New Orleans, throwing 47- and 17-

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	5	0	0	Washington	5	0	0
Miami	2	3	0	Dallas	3	2	0
New England	2	3	0	Philadelphia	3	2	0
N.Y. Jets	2	3	0	Phoenix	3	2	0
Indianapolis	0	5	0	N.Y. Giants	2	3	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	3	1	0	Chicago	4	1	0
Cleveland	2	2	0	Detroit	4	1	0
Pittsburgh	2	2	0	Minnesota	2	3	0
Cincinnati	0	4	0	Green Bay	1	4	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	0	5	0
Denver	4	1	0	NFC West			
Kansas City	3	2	0	New Orleans	5	0	0
L.A. Raiders	3	2	0	Atlanta	2	3	0
Seattle	2	3	0	L.A. Rams	2	3	0
San Diego	0	5	0	San Francisco	2	3	0

Scores

AFC

Kansas City 14, San Diego 13

N.Y. Jets 41, Miami 23

Seattle 31, Indianapolis 3

NFC

Dallas 21, N.Y. Giants 16

Detroit 31, Tampa Bay 3

L.A. Rams 23, Green Bay 21

New Orleans 27, Atlanta 6

Washington 23, Philadelphia 0

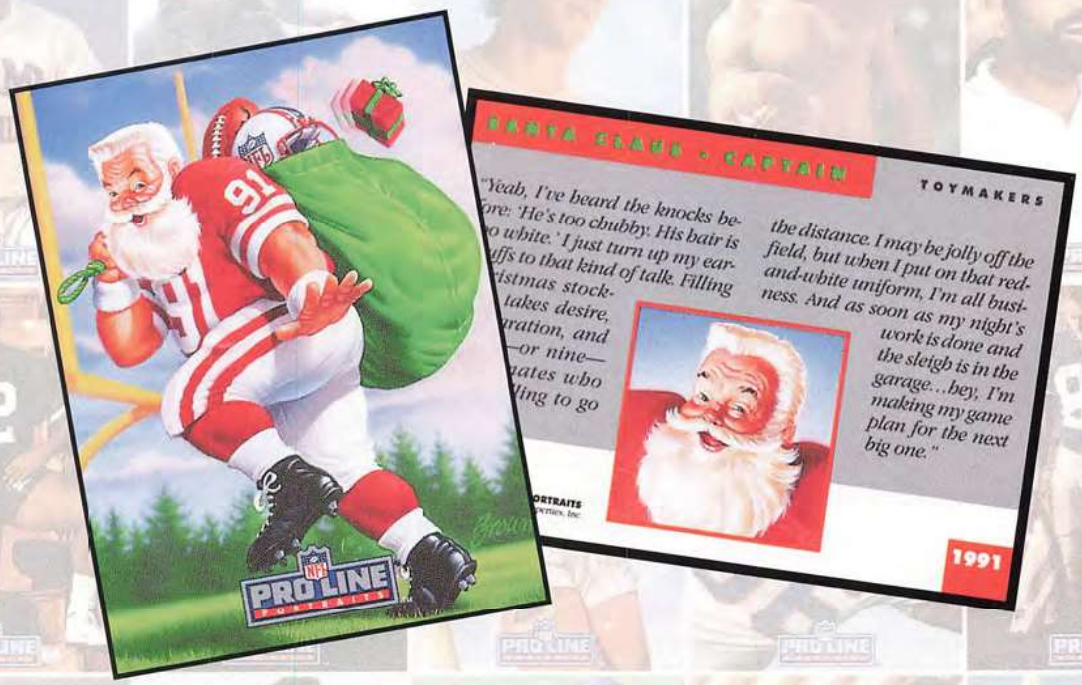
Interconference

Buffalo 35, Chicago 20

Denver 13, Minnesota 6

L.A. Raiders 12, San Francisco 6

Phoenix 24, New England 10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"Yeah, I've heard the knocks be-
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istmas stock-
takes desire,
ration, and
—or nine—
ates who
ling to go
the distance. I may be jolly off the
field, but when I put on that red-
and-white uniform, I'm all busi-
ness. And as soon as my night's
work is done and
the sleigh is in the
garage...hey, I'm
making my game
plan for the next
big one."
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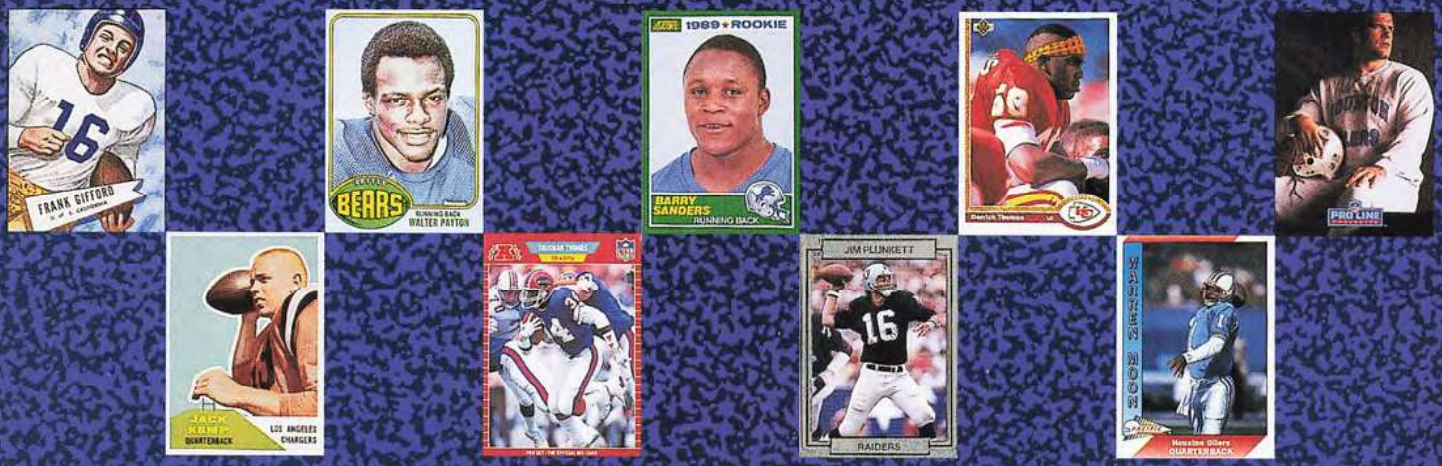
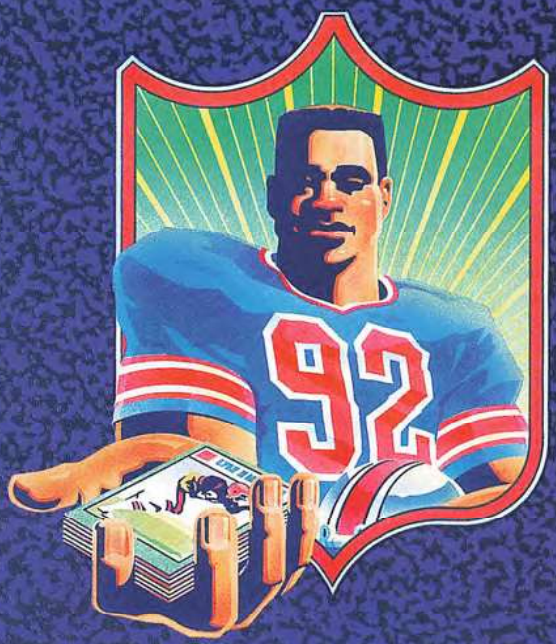


COLLECTORS' CHOICE



AN NFL GUIDE TO PRO FOOTBALL TRADING CARDS AND SUPER BOWL MEMORABILIA

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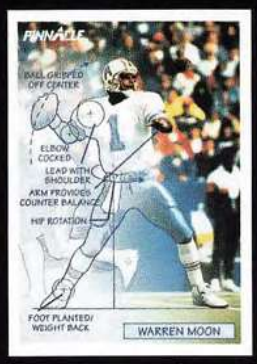

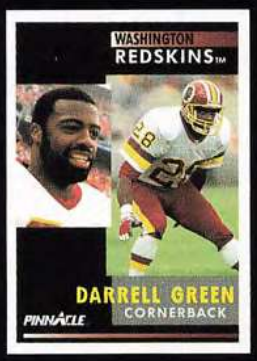

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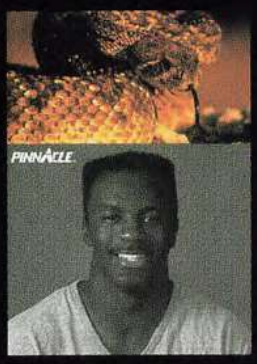

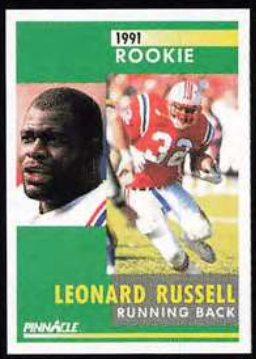

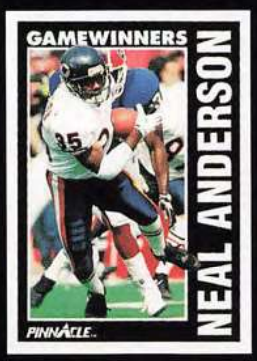

The color, drama and glory of the NFL are captured as never before in PINNACLE. The 415-card premier set presents unsurpassed action photography, insightful text and state-of-the-art graphics on the finest super-glossy card stock. There are 353 player cards including 58 rookies and 62 subset cards. Adding to the value of PINNACLE is the trading card industry's first encoded anticounterfeit system. PINNACLE the highest point of achievement in the trading card industry.

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THE FOOTBALL TRADING CARD BUSINESS BEGAN WITH A WHIMPER, THEN STAYED THAT WAY FOR MANY YEARS. SINCE 1989, IT'S ANOTHER STORY.

By John Leptich

Almost from the time they were introduced, pro football trading cards generated all the excitement of a fair catch.

Among card collectors, baseball clearly was king, with a reign that dated back to the 1880s. Football was an afterthought, regarded by dealers more as a nuisance than as merchandise.

Mike Ellis, a collector from Hoffman Estates, Illinois, remembers the reaction he encountered years ago when he would inquire about football cards.

"Dealers would look at me kind of funny," he says, "go under their tables or counters, dust off a box full of football cards, and hand it to me hoping I'd buy it."

Football cards—even those of well-known players—were offered at give-away prices throughout the sixties and seventies, a quiet, but unmistakable, indication that the market was headed nowhere.

Fast forward to 1991, when there were 19 major football-card sets, distributed by nine separate manufacturers, in a head-shaking variety of formats. Embossed cards. Cards imprinted in gold. Cards with four-color photos on front and back. Autographed cards. Cards with hologram images.

THE POPULARITY OF THE 1965 JOE NAMATH ROOKIE IS UNSURPASSED. IT COMMANDS AT LEAST $1,250 IN MINT CONDITION.

Manufacturers now produce more sets of football cards than baseball cards, heralding the arrival of a new era. The king hasn't abdicated, but he's definitely been forced to share the kingdom.

"There's been a big resurgence in football cards recently," says Gene Liprace of 7th Inning Stretch sports collectibles in Schaumburg and Palatine, Illinois. "Football cards have finally been brought out of the cellar and people are aware of them.

"I think the new cards had a lot to do with the resurgence, but there's still a lot of interest in the older cards. People finally are starting to recognize football cards, and I think they're here to stay."

Several companies had dabbled in the business (Fleer and the now-defunct Philadelphia Chewing Gum Company produced NFL, AFL, or combined sets in the early sixties), but only Topps produced annual football trading cards from 1955 through 1988. Then a tiny snowball was set into motion. In 1989, NFL Properties helped form a company called Pro Set that introduced a new football set positioned as "the official trading card of the NFL." At the same time, Score, a company that had established itself in 1988 with baseball cards, also entered the football card

ON THE COVER: TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: 1952 BOWMAN LARGE FRANK GIFFORD ROOKIE CARD; 1976 TOPPS WALTER PAYTON ROOKIE CARD; 1989 SCORE BARRY SANDERS ROOKIE CARD; 1991 UPPER DECK DERRICK THOMAS; AND 1991 PRO LINE PORTRAITS RAY CHILDRESS. BOTTOM ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: 1960 FLEER JACK KEMP ROOKIE CARD; 1989 PRO SET THURMAN THOMAS ROOKIE CARD; 1990 ACTION PACKED JIM PLUNKETT BRAILLE CARD; AND 1991 PACIFIC WARREN MOON. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

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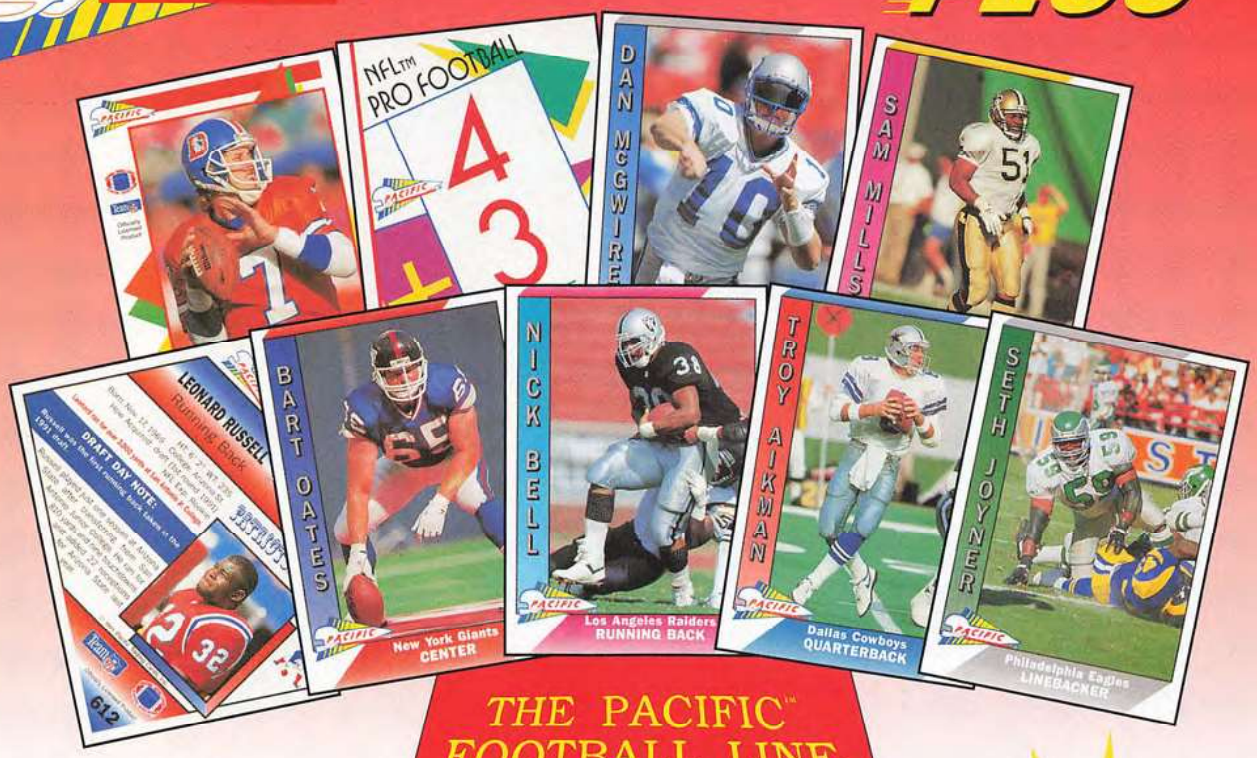

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market. Both featured high-quality cards with brilliant action photographs on the fronts and color mug shots on the backs. The avalanche was under way.

"As soon as people found out there was money to be made, more new ones were made," says Glen Soustek, president of Westlake Cards, Comics & Coins in Glendale, Illinois. "For years, we were told that football cards were undervalued and that they'd have their day. Now, we're seeing more and more sets, and that day has come."

Collectors now have a wide range of brands and formats to inspect:

- In addition to its regular cards, Topps also produces Bowman (a name that was revived after a 36-year absence) and Stadium Club cards.
- Action Packed distributes embossed cards and randomly packed cards with 18-karat and 24-karat gold impressions.
- Fleer produces its own cards, plus Ultra and Stars 'n' Stripes cards.
- Pro Set manufactures two series and a final update of regular cards, two Platinum series, and a smaller World League set.
- NFL Pro Line Portraits, personality cards produced by the NFL, feature stylized shots of players (and wives) with randomly inserted autographs.
- Upper Deck (with special subsets on Joe Montana and Joe Namath), and Pacific Plus (with silver- and gold-foil insert cards) each has two series.

FROM THE COLLECTION OF STEVE GALLETTA

AT $5,000, THE 1935 NATIONAL CHICLE BRONKO NAGURSKI IS THE MOST VALUABLE FOOTBALL CARD.

"There's so much out there," says Steve Chrastka, a collector from Bensenville, Illinois. "I got started collecting by buying Pro Set cards when they first came out, and I've gotten into other football sets since. I buy a few cards from other sports but, to me, there's nothing quite like football. The action lends itself to great pictures and colors."

Nick Fischer of Lyons, Illinois, and his wife Diane are among the few farsighted hobbyists who recognized a booming trend before the boom. So much so that the hobby has become business. They are dealers now.

"When I started collecting a couple of years ago, it was easy to keep up because there weren't as many football sets," Fischer says. "Even cards of well-known players such as Jim Brown, Bart Starr, Johnny Unitas, and Walter Payton were relatively inexpensive then. I bought them before more people discovered football cards and the prices went up."

Thanks to the popularity of the newer editions, the long-forgotten, older cards have taken on a new life of their own. Shorter supplies from those years and increased demand have resulted in rising prices.

The checkered history of football trading cards follows a winding path that embraces well-remembered players and long-forgotten companies that reproduced their images.

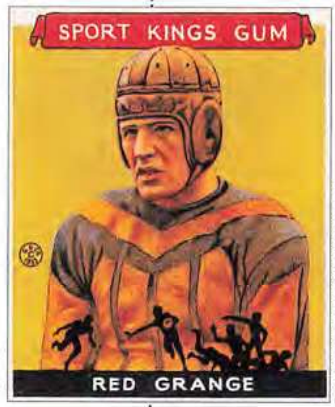
The first documented football card series, produced in 1896, contained college players. About 40 different cards featuring players from Yale, Princeton, and Harvard were inserted in packages of May Cut Plug tobacco as premiums. They were crudely designed, with

FROM THE COLLECTION OF STEVE GALLETTA

THE 1933 GOUDEY GUM SPORT KINGS SET, WHICH INCLUDED "ALL THE LEADERS IN EVERY BRANCH OF SPORT," FEATURED PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME MEMBERS JIM THORPE AND RED GRANGE (FAR RIGHT).

FROM THE COLLECTION OF STEVE GALLETTA

THE 1887 GOODWIN CHAMPION'S CARD OF YALE CAPTAIN/COACH H. BEECHER IS THE OLDEST KNOWN CARD SHOWING A FOOTBALL PLAYER.



FROM THE COLLECTION OF STEVE GALLETTA

THE COPY ON THE BACK OF GRANGE'S SPORT KINGS CARD SAID HE KEPT IN TRAINING "BY DELIVERING HUGE CAKES OF ICE DURING HIS SUMMER VACATIONS."

Joe

2,500 NEW REASONS TO

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Joe Namath, courtesy of Sports Placement Services.

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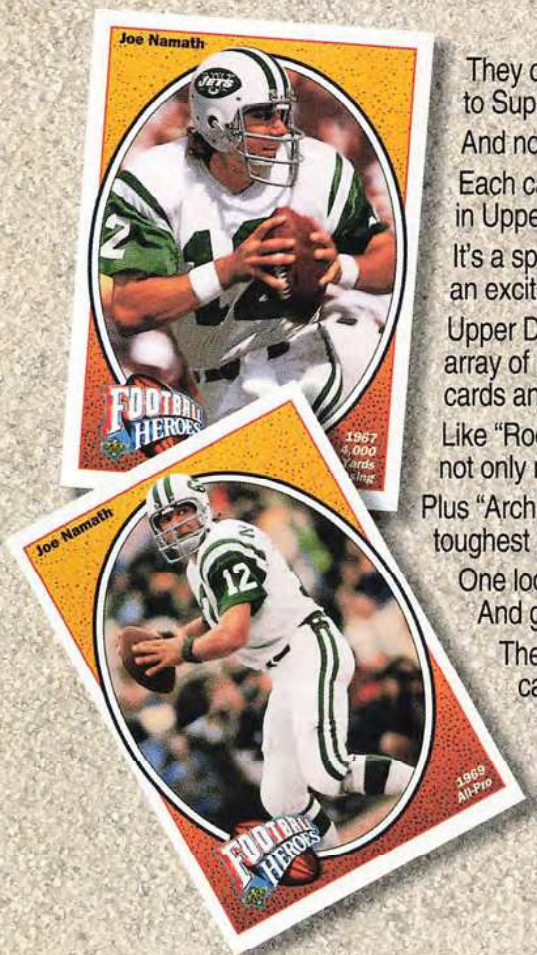

They called him "Broadway Joe." The man who took the Jets from obscurity to Super Bowl champions.

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Upper Deck's incredible new 200-card high number series features an array of recently traded players in their new uniforms, as well as special cards and exciting subsets.

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Plus "Arch Rivals™." A 6-card series of top offensive players pitted against their toughest defensive rivals.

One look at the action and you'll want to start your collection now. And get 'em while you can, because the supply is limited.

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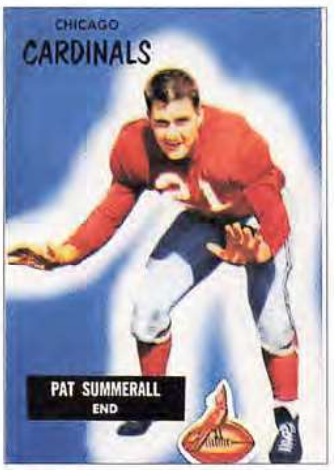
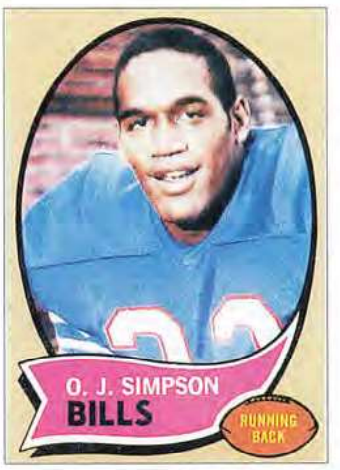


IN 1955, THE PAT SUMMERALL ROOKIE WAS IN THE BOWMAN SET. TODAY, HE'S IN THE BOOTH FOR CBS.

GALE SAYERS DID A HEISMAN TROPHY POSE FOR HIS 1966 PHILADELPHIA CHEWING GUM ROOKIE CARD.



THE JUICE WAS FIRST COMMITTED TO CARDBOARD IN THE 1970 TOPPS SET.

no text, and printed on only one side.

The first set devoted largely to professional football, known as Football Stars, was distributed by National Chicle Gum in 1935. The 36-card set featured future Pro Football Hall of Fame players Bronko Nagurski, Earl (Dutch) Clark, Ken Strong, Cliff Battles, Turk Edwards, and Clark Hinkle, as well as Notre Dame coaching legend Knute Rockne.

Although the set attracted only modest attention, it would have been a worthwhile investment. According to the Sport Americana Football Card Price Guide Number 8, issued in 1991, the complete set of Football Stars, in excellent-to-mint condition, is worth $12,000 today. The Nagurski card alone is valued at $5,000. Rockne sells for $1,250.

Not until 1948 did another set of football cards hit the market. That's when the Bowman and Leaf companies each produced its initial football issue. Leaf printed another set in 1949—but never again. Bowman didn't return until 1950, continuing until 1955 when Topps bought the company. (Topps resurrected the Bowman name for a new line of cards in 1991.)

Topps's first football set (Topps Felt) was a 100-card college issue in 1950, replete with appropriate college pennants on the card backs. And 1951 brought a 75-card college set (Topps Magic) with quiz questions and scratch-off answers on the backs. In 1955, Topps produced its All-American set, a collection of 100 college football greats that included Tom Harmon, Ernie Nevers, Amos Alonzo Stagg, and the 1924 Notre Dame backfield known as the Four Horsemen.

LANDRY'S 1950 BOWMAN ROOKIE CALLED HIM AN OUTSTANDING DEFENSIVE BACK, YET SHOWED HIM AS A QUARTERBACK, A POSITION HE NEVER PLAYED IN THE PROS.

Finally, in 1956, Topps produced its first NFL set, which included 121 cards. Prominent rookie cards included in that series, which also featured team photos, were Roosevelt Brown, Bill George, Rosey Grier, Stan Jones, Lenny Moore, and Joe Schmidt.

By 1957, Topps included 155 cards in the NFL set. In 1961, with the inclusion of 64 players from the American Football League, the number had swelled to 198.

One of the most popular of Topps's pro football cards featured an AFL player. That was the 1965 Joe Namath card. Namath, of course, went on to carve a place for himself in pro football history, but that's not the only reason that his card increased in value. For unexplained reasons, it was produced in slightly

(continued on page 14)

Thanks for making

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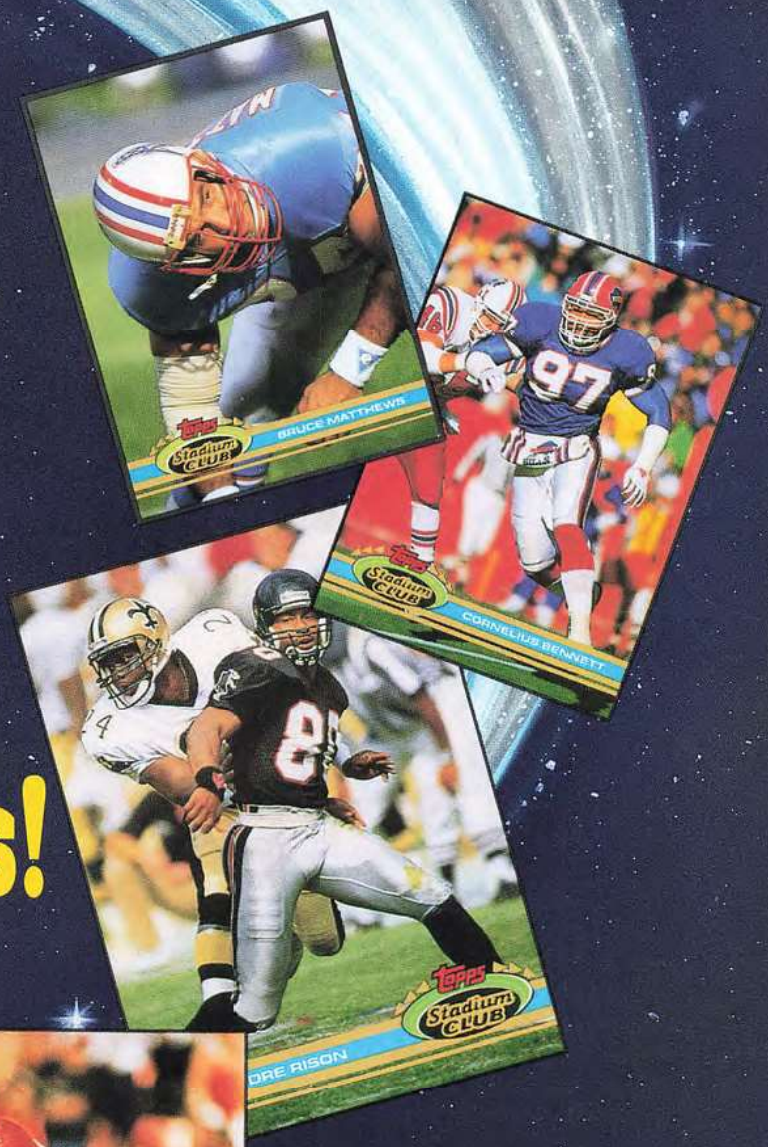
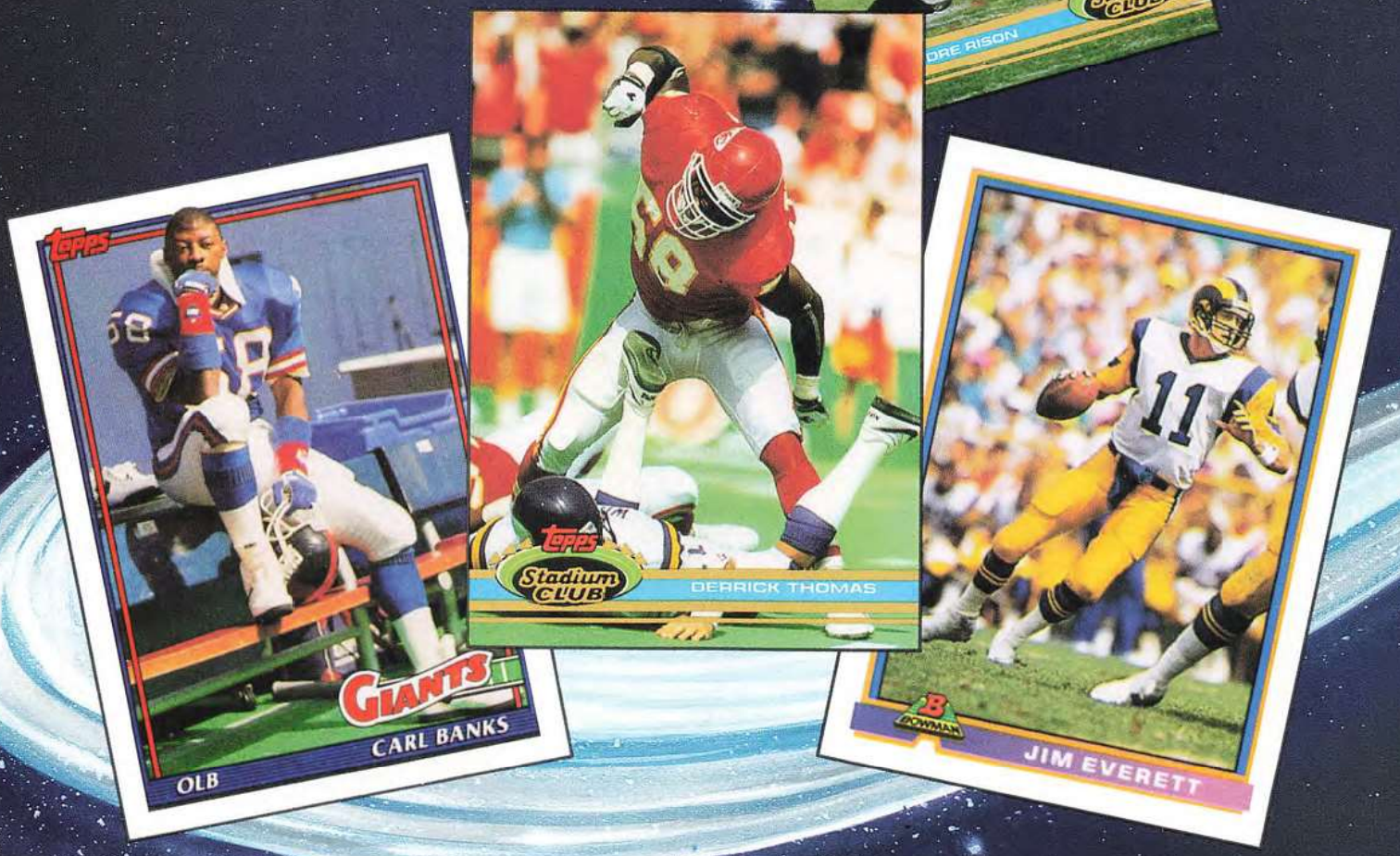




FROM THE FAMILY OF TOPPS SPORTS CARDS

SUPER VALUES

By Roger Pavey

Program vendors are as much a part of the scene at the Super Bowl as the guys with booming voices selling popcorn and peanuts.

Since the first Super Bowl was played in 1967, game programs have become the most popular of all the collectibles associated with the event. The only way to get programs from Super Bowls I-X was to purchase them at the stadium, and that's the main reason a complete set now sells for around $3,000. The most expensive, at $500, is from Super Bowl V; programs from I, II, and III are not far behind at $350.

Super Bowl IV, at $200, is relatively inexpensive by comparison, the demand influenced by a collector's edition that was printed after the game. Game programs from VI ($150) and VII ($100) command less. Because of a short press run for Super Bowl VIII in Houston, those programs are valued at $200. The programs for IX and X fetch a little more than $100 each. Beginning with Super Bowl XI, when programs were offered for home delivery, they became much more plentiful. Those from Super Bowl XI and on are valued from $50 to $15.

TICKETS FROM SUPER BOWLS XXIV AND XXV BEG THE QUESTION: WHY DID THEY GO UNUSED?

Another major collectible is the ticket stub. Collectors

SUPER BOWL MEDIA PINS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): THE TIE BAR FROM THE FIRST GAME, XXI, XIX, AND XVIII. MEDIA PINS ARE THE TOUGHEST SUPER BOWL COLLECTIBLE.

were parked outside Tampa Stadium last year offering as much as $100 for the Super Bowl XXV stub, which contained a hologram.

A complete collection of stubs could bring as much as $4,500. Surprisingly, the Super Bowl I stub is not the most expensive—the stub from IV is. Many of those were ruined by ticket takers in New Orleans who were accustomed to tearing and disposing of the wrong end of the ticket.

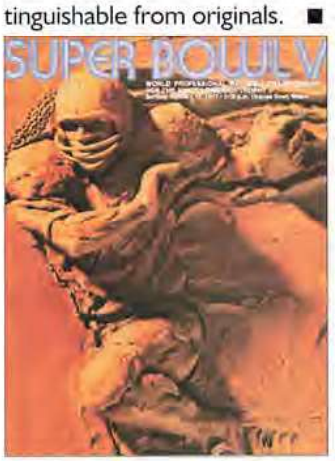
Here's how collectors value the Super stubs: I ($400); II ($375); III ($350); IV ($500); V ($300); VI ($275); VII ($200); VIII ($250); IX ($150); X ($175); XI ($125); XII ($100); XIII-XXI ($75); XXII-XXIII ($50);XXIV ($100) and XXV ($125).

Unused tickets are another story. A full ticket generally is worth four times the value of a stub and sometimes more. With last year's game in Tampa resulting in only 502 no-shows (as opposed to nearly 74,000 tickets that were used), unused tickets to XXV have sold for as much as $1,000. A full collection of unused tickets would be priceless.

Media pins, dispensed to members of the working press, also are valuable collectibles. A complete set is worth about $11,500. The Super Bowl I set (tie bar and cuff links) goes for $3,500. The football-shaped charm from II and the tie bar from III go for $2,000 each. There were no pins for Super Bowls IV and V.

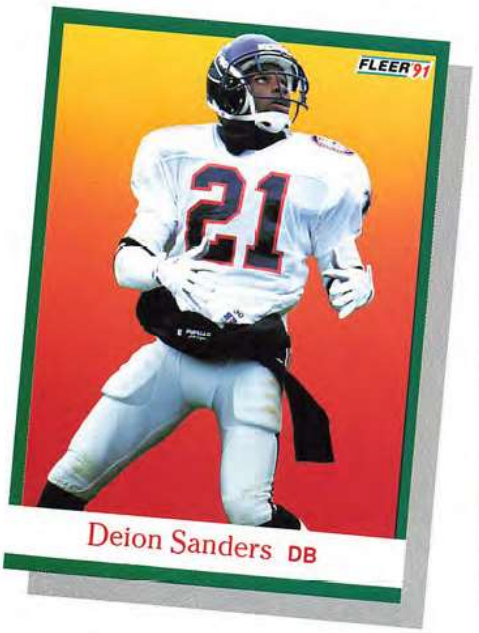
Here's how collectors value the media pins: VI ($300); VII ($400); VIII ($300); IX ($275); X ($200); XI ($175); XII ($250); XIII-XV ($150); XVI ($375); XVII-XX ($125); XXI-XXII ($50); XXIII ($125); XXIV-XXV ($150).

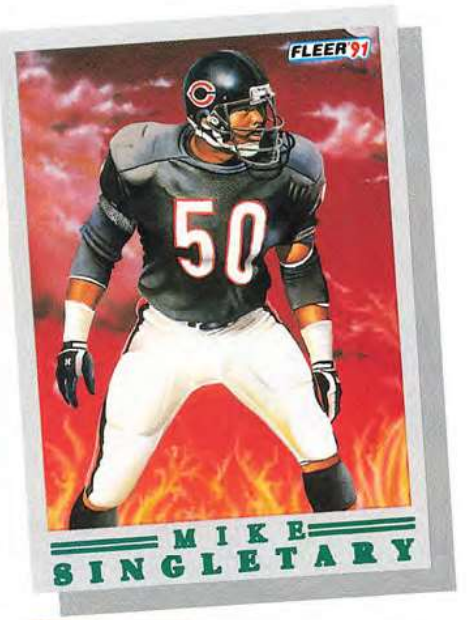
Another popular collectible is the patch, an item originally given to VIPs and members of the media to commemorate each game. At one time, a set of patches sold for $1,500 to $2,000. But reproductions are available for around $275, and those souvenir sets are indistinguishable from originals. ■

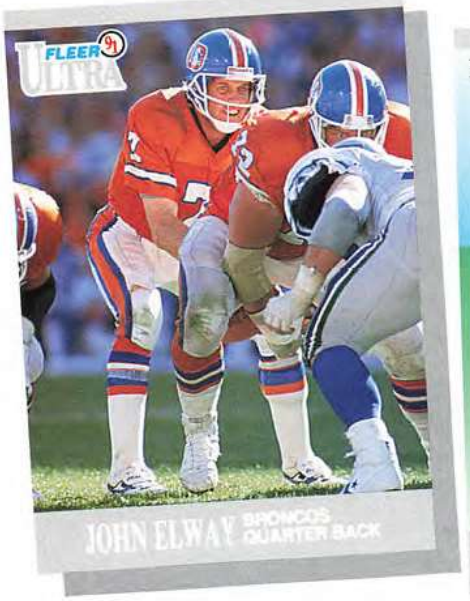


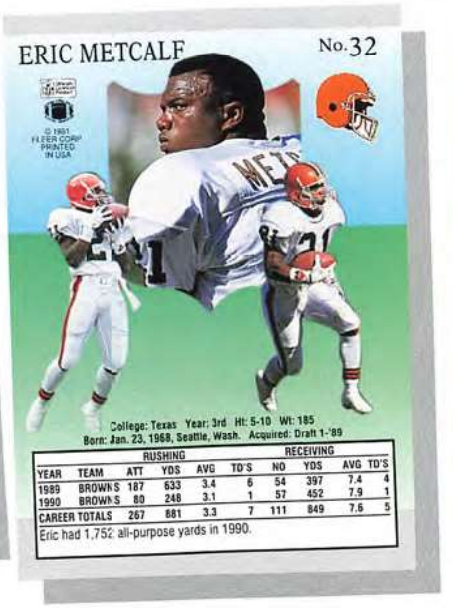
BECAUSE A LIMITED QUANTITY WERE PRINTED, SUPER BOWL V PROGRAMS ARE THE MOST VALUABLE OF THE 26 EDITIONS OF THE MAGAZINE. A COMPLETE SET IS VALUED AT $3,000.

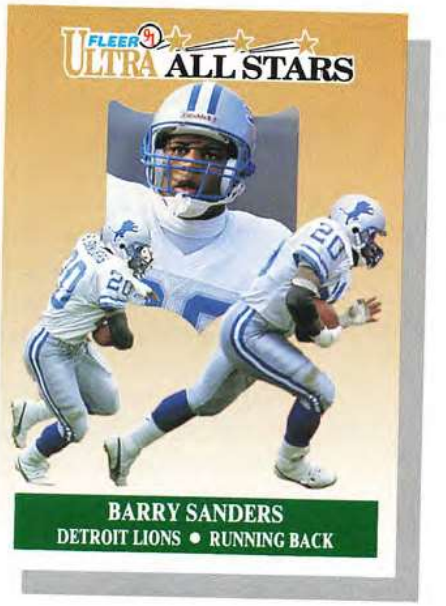
GET IN ON THE ACTION!








ERIC METCALF
No. 32
College: Texas Year: 3rd Ht: 5-10 Wt: 185
Born: Jan. 23, 1968, Seattle, Wash. Acquired: Draft 1-'89
RUSHING
RECEIVING
YEAR TEAM ATT YDS AVG TD'S NO YDS AVG TD'S
1989 BROWNS 187 633 3.4 6 54 397 7.4 4
1990 BROWNS 80 248 3.1 1 57 452 7.9 1
CAREER TOTALS 267 881 3.3 7 111 849 7.6 5
Eric had 1,752 all-purpose yards in 1990.



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Team NFL

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FLEER
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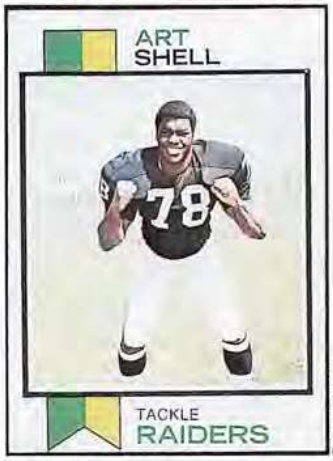
(continued from page 10)
smaller numbers than others in the set. In mint condition, the 1965 Namath is worth at least $1,250 today.

As an historical footnote, it also is worth noting that Namath posed for the card in rather casual fashion, slip-



THE BACK OF SHELL'S 1973 ROOKIE CARD LISTED HIS NFL PUNT RETURN STATISTICS.

ping a Jets jersey over his street clothes.

The number of football cards produced in annual sets gradually has increased through the years. Topps printed 660 cards in its 1991 regular set and 500 more in its Premium Stadium Club issue. Pro Set printed 812, with a late-season update accounting for 40 more.

Surely, one of the most unusual cards to emerge in this rebirth was the first braille trading card, featuring Raiders quarterback Jim Plunkett and produced by Action Packed in 1990. (Not coincidentally, Plunkett's parents were blind.)

Pro Set president Lud Denny, whose involvement in NFL merchandising has included licensed sunshades and an Armchair Quarterback game, believes that football trading cards were a success story waiting to be discovered.

"There was absolutely no reason football cards weren't being made, considering the popularity of the sport," Denny says. "I was struck by the fact that baseball had an inordinate share of the market. Not that people shouldn't buy baseball cards, but there was room for other sports, like football.

"My intent was to resolve that. I think by responding to collectors' desires, by keeping cards as updated as possible, we've helped to stimulate the market."

NFL Properties, the NFL's promotion and marketing arm, has been a driving force behind this transformation. John Bello, President of NFL Properties, believed that the NFL's enormous popularity would support several sets of trading cards.

"Given the NFL's leadership and dominance in all merchandising categories," Bello says, "we felt football cards were undermarketed. It appeared to us that Topps, as the exclusive licensee in the category, was not focused on football. We also saw that baseball cards exploded when the category went non-exclusive in 1981. Additionally, consumer research indicated the market was ready for new, innovative, and superior quality NFL cards that were broadly distributed.

"In 1989, when the 'coast was clear' legally, we collaborated with Lud Denny to produce and market the Pro Set concept. We packaged new ideas—the fan kit, points for merchandise and memorabilia, and the living set, with a high-quality NFL set of more than 800 cards. A full marketing campaign with TV advertising, promotion, and sampling supported the product. The results were electrifying.

"In one year, football-card sales jumped six times over the 1988 figures. Since then, the market has expanded exponentially with exciting and creative new designs and treatments. We are delighted with this acceptance. It all adds up to ideal promotion and exposure for the NFL and its players."

DA BEARS' HEAD COACH FIRST APPEARED IN THE 1963 TOPPS SET.

The extraordinarily modest roots have grown into a trading-card phenomenon. Cards that once were sold at bare-bones prices have become collectors' items.

"I've always been a football collector," says Mike Perrotta of Gridiron Collectibles in Providence, Rhode Island. "For many years, you'd hear dealers say, 'It doesn't sell, so I don't buy it.' That's all changing now. I have customers who want all the football cards they can get."

Says Pro Set's Denny, "I think the card business can grow substantially more. It has to grow by creating certain collector bases, not by selling more product to the same people. I don't know if the marketplace will support fifteen or more football products. The market will decide that. In the next two or three years, collectors will decide what they want and what they don't want."

One thing is clear: They do want pro football cards. Even if the discovery took a long time to happen. ■

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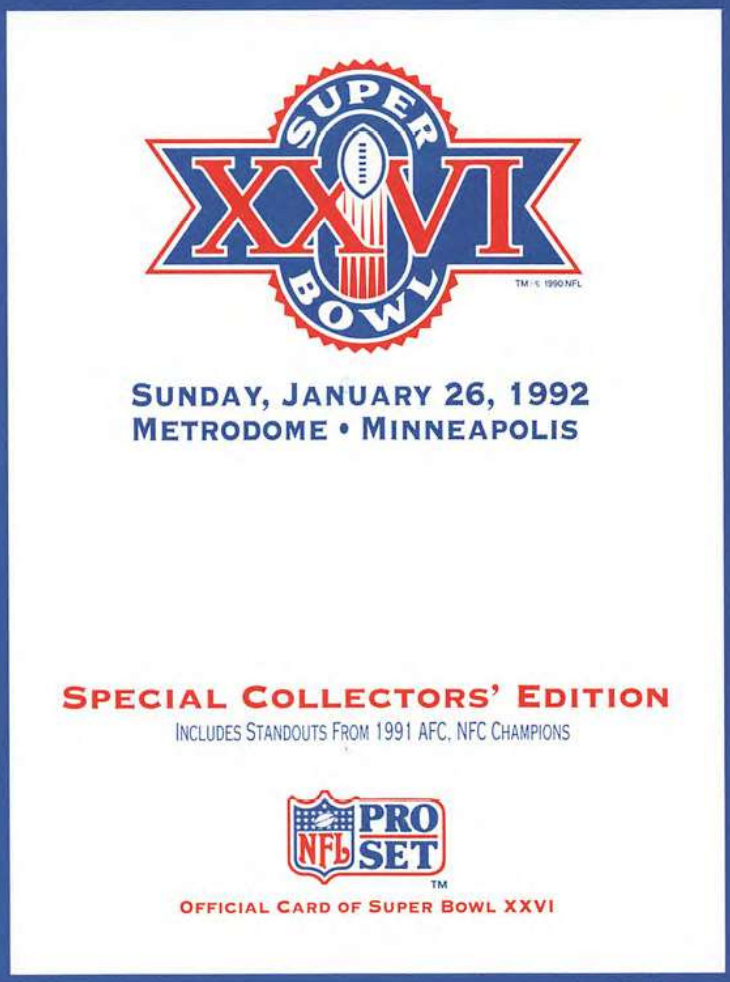
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PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Denver running back **Gaston Green** ran for 158 yards—his third 100-yard game in the first five weeks—to lead the Broncos past the Vikings 13-6 and give Dan Reeves his 100th victory as Denver's head coach.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Odomes saves a score.

AFC DEFENSE—Buffalo cornerback **Nate Odomes** made 8 solo tackles and broke up 4 passes as the Bills stopped the Bears 35-20. On one critical goal-line stand, he had 2 touchdown-saving tackles and broke up a pass in the end zone.

NFC OFFENSE—Dallas quarterback **Troy Aikman** passed for 277 yards and the game-winning touchdown—a 23-yard strike to Michael Irvin with 2:13 left—to help the Cowboys upend the Giants 21-16.

Bob Rosato

Aikman led Dallas.

NFC DEFENSE—Saints linebacker **Rickey Jackson** forced 1 fumble and recovered another to set up a pair of field goals, and also made 6 tackles, including 3 sacks, to lead New Orleans past Atlanta 27-6.

yard touchdown passes to Floyd Turner. Dalton Hilliard raced 65 yards for another Saints score.

If there was a first-month award to the NFL's unluckiest team, it would have gone to the Eagles, who lost Pro Bowl quarterback Randall Cunningham for the season with a knee injury in the first game. Then, after building a 3-1 record behind Jim McMahon, the Eagles saw McMahon go down with another knee injury that will sideline him three to four weeks. The Eagles, without a front-line or second-line quarterback, lost 23-0 to Washington.

The Eagles-Redskins game was scoreless when McMahon limped off late in the first quarter, and the Philadelphia offense collapsed without him.

Backup Pat Ryan, out of football in 1990, but signed when Cunningham was hurt, threw 3 interceptions—2 to cornerback Darrell Green—and completed only 4 of 14 passes as the Eagles earned just 4 first downs and gained only 89 yards.

The unbeaten Redskins shut out their first three home opponents, outscoring Detroit, Phoenix, and Philadelphia 102-0.

While the Bills, Saints, and Redskins were off to fast starts, the 49ers and Giants both fell to 2-3.

Still playing without injured quarterback Joe Montana, San Francisco failed to score a touchdown and lost a battle of field goals to the Raiders 12-6.

A sellout crowd of 91,494 in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum watched the Raiders' Jeff Jaeger equal his club record with 4 field goals, 3 of them 41 yards or longer. Jaeger, who was tied for the NFL lead in field goals, had made 12 of his first 13 attempts.

In Dallas, the Giants gained 487 yards, got 368 passing yards from Jeff Hostetler, never punted, and still lost to the Cowboys 21-16.

"Any time you don't punt, you have to win the damn football game," grumbled Ray Handley, the Giants coach.

Hostetler rallied the Giants from a 14-3 third-quarter deficit to a 16-14 lead on Stephen Baker's diving, 19-yard touchdown catch with 5:41 left.

But Dallas, behind Troy Aikman, marched 84 yards to the winning touchdown, which the young quarterback got with a 23-yard pass to Michael Irvin with 2:13 to go. Irvin broke a tackle by cornerback Mark Collins at the New York 4.

"It's the biggest win since I've been here," Aikman said. "It was one of the teams we needed to beat to establish ourselves. I just hope I can play here long enough where a victory over the Giants won't be considered a novelty."

Three turnovers contributed to the Dallas victory, including a fumble that safety Ray Horton returned 20 yards for a third-quarter touchdown, and an end-zone interception by cornerback Issiac Holt with 1:11 left.

If Dallas's win over the Giants was important to the team mentally, the Jets received a similar lift from their 41-23 bashing of Miami.

Marv Rubin

QUOTE

Raiders defensive end Howie Long, discussing the ups and downs of his life in the NFL:

"I've been counted out more times than democracy in the Baltics."

The Jets had lost successive heartbreakers to Buffalo and Chicago, falling to the Bears in overtime in a game they should have won. Still, they bounced back, scoring 2 touchdowns in the last minute of the first half to beat Miami.

The Dolphins were leading 10-7 when Brad Baxter ran 2 yards for a touchdown and a 14-10 New York lead with 38 seconds left in the half. Twenty-six seconds later, the Jets scored again when wide receiver Chris Burkett blocked Reggie Roby's punt and returned it 11 yards for a 21-10 lead.

Dalton Hilliard scored on a 65-yard run as the Saints beat Atlanta 27-6 to stay unbeaten.

For the day, New York rushed for 206 yards, got an 18-for-24 passing performance from Ken O'Brien, scored on an 83-yard interception return by safety Erik McMillan, and sacked Dan Marino 4 times.

"I asked the players on Wednesday to forget about the last game," head coach Bruce Coslet said. "On Thursday, I told them to quit talking about it. It's behind us."

Quarterback Tom Tupa was as hot as the weather in leading Phoenix to a 24-10 victory over New England.

Ignoring an on-field temperature of 115, Tupa passed for 312 yards and 3 touchdowns. Ernie Jones, who grabbed 1 of Tupa's scoring passes, had 8 catches for 145 yards.

Rookie Jon Vaughn returned a kickoff 99 yards for New England's only touchdown.

In Seattle, the Seahawks used rookie quarterback Dan McGwire in the first half and veteran Jeff Kemp in the second to rout Indianapolis 31-3. Chris Warren returned a punt 59 yards for a touchdown, while John L. Williams ran for 80 yards and a score, and caught 5 passes for 41 more yards.

The Colts not only lost their fifth consecutive game, they also lost head coach Ron Meyer, who was replaced by defensive coordinator Rick Venturi two days later. ■

Bill Mount

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WEEK 6

OCTOBER 6

Near-Perfect Chiefs Hand Bills Shocking First Loss; Only Redskins, Saints Remain Undefeated

On a Monday night in early autumn, Buffalo quarterback Jim Kelly's thoughts turned to the holidays. "We gave the Kansas City Chiefs so many gifts, they should be happy until next Christmas," he said.

The Chiefs were happy, all right. They recovered 5 fumbles (3 by Kelly), dominated the game both on offense and defense, and shocked previously unbeaten Buffalo 33-6.

The game not only put a blemish on Buffalo's record (5-1), but sent the 4-2 Chiefs into a tie with Denver for first place in the AFC West. The Broncos had a bad weekend, too, falling to AFC Central leader Houston 42-14.

And so, six weeks into the season, only two NFC teams, Washington (6-0, after a victory over Chicago) and idle New Orleans (5-0), still were perfect.

In earning their first Monday night victory since 1975, the Chiefs were almost perfect.

On offense, Christian Okoye bulled for 130 yards and 2 touchdowns, and quick rookie Harvey Williams ran for another 103. Nick Lowery kicked 4 field goals.

Besides recovering 5 fumbles, the defense sacked Kelly 6 times—4 by linebacker Derrick Thomas and 2 by end Bill Maas—and held Buffalo without a touchdown for the first time since December 4, 1988.

The Bills lost fumbles on their final four possessions (including a kickoff), setting up Kansas City's final 17 points. In addition, a first-half fumble killed a Bills' drive and led to another Chiefs touchdown for a total of 24 points.

With an offensive and defensive effort like that, Kansas City controlled the ball a staggering 44 minutes against the NFL's top offensive team.

"There was a lot of energy, a lot of adrenalin flowing," Maas said. "Our defense shut down the number-one offense, while our offense held the ball and ran and ran and ran. It was a night to remember."

It was a day to remember in the Astrodome, where Houston's defense scored or set up 28 first-half points as the Oilers jumped to a 35-0 halftime lead over Denver and breezed 42-14.

"My hat's off to the Houston Oilers," Denver coach Dan Reeves said. "In the first half, they played about as good as any team I've seen this season."

Reeves first tipped his hat only 1:28 into the game when Houston safety Bo Orlando blocked a punt, and safety Bubba McDowell recovered in the end zone for a 7-0 lead.

In the second quarter, the Oilers' defense went on a 21-0 blitz in less than four minutes. Cornerback Cris Dishman set up 1 touchdown with a 43-yard interception return and scored another on a 19-yard fumble return. Defensive end William Fuller set up still another touchdown with a fumble recovery and forced the fumble Dishman returned for a score. Fuller also had 3 of Houston's 6 sacks.

Warren Moon joined in the fun, too, passing for 334 yards and 2 touchdowns.

In Chicago, Washington stayed unbeaten with a 20-7 victory over the Bears, who suffered their second successive loss after opening the season 4-0. Redskins quarterback Mark Rypien threw 26- and 5-yard touchdown passes to Art Monk, and the defense made two big plays in the fourth quarter.

The Bears had cut Washington's lead to 10-7, but defensive end Fred Stokes and linebacker Kurt Gouveia set up a touchdown and field goal, respectively, with successive interceptions off Jim Harbaugh.

Bears coach Mike Ditka was unhappy with his offense. "I don't know who we can beat," Ditka said. "It would have to be some team that scores less than seven points."

Detroit had less than 7 points in the fourth quarter, 3 to be exact, and Minnesota had 20, but the surprising Lions scored 21 in the last seven minutes to beat the Vikings 24-20. In winning their fifth consecutive game, the Lions climbed past the Bears to take over first place in the NFC Central.

Barry Sanders won it for Detroit on a 15-yard run with 36 seconds left, breaking a tackle by Pro Bowl safety Joey Browner at the 3-yard line. Sanders got the ball on a third-and-1 draw play as his touchdown finished off a 72-yard drive.

The NFL's leading rusher ran for 116 yards

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	5	1	0
Miami	3	3	0
N.Y. Jets	3	3	0
New England	2	4	0
Indianapolis	0	6	0
AFC Central			
Houston	4	1	0
Pittsburgh	3	2	0
Cleveland	2	3	0
Cincinnati	0	5	0
AFC West			
Denver	4	2	0
Kansas City	4	2	0
L.A. Raiders	3	3	0
Seattle	3	3	0
San Diego	1	5	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	6	0	0
Dallas	4	2	0
N.Y. Giants	3	3	0
Philadelphia	3	3	0
Phoenix	3	3	0
NFC Central			
Detroit	5	1	0
Chicago	4	2	0
Minnesota	2	4	0
Green Bay	1	5	0
Tampa Bay	1	5	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	5	0	0
Atlanta	2	3	0
L.A. Rams	2	3	0
San Francisco	2	3	0

Scores

AFC

Houston 42, Denver 14
Kansas City 33, Buffalo 6
Miami 20, New England 10
N.Y. Jets 17, Cleveland 14
Pittsburgh 21, Indianapolis 3
San Diego 21, L.A. Raiders 13
Seattle 13, Cincinnati 7

NFC

Dallas 20, Green Bay 17
Detroit 24, Minnesota 20
N.Y. Giants 20, Phoenix 9
Tampa Bay 14, Philadelphia 13
Washington 20, Chicago 7

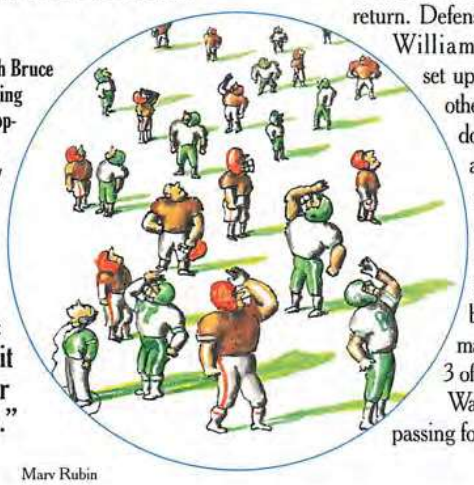
Art Monk caught 2 touchdown passes from Mark Rypien as Washington stayed unbeaten with a hard-fought 20-7 victory over the Bears in Chicago.

Don Lansu

QUOTE

Jets head coach Bruce Coslet, discussing the 16-yard, pop-fly touchdown pass thrown by running back Blair Thomas to Rob Moore in his team's 17-14 victory over Cleveland:

"I thought it would never come down."



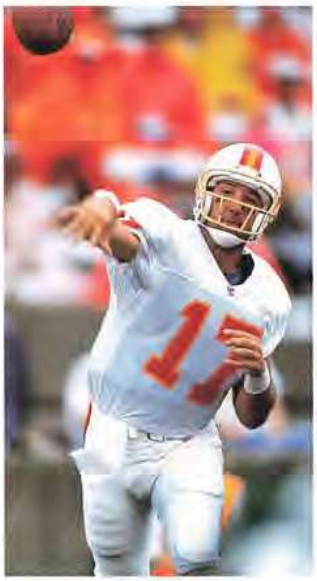
Marv Rubin

—his fourth 100-yard game in a row—and caught 9 passes for another 76 yards.

Rodney Peete directed the Lions' big comeback, throwing 68- and 16-yard touchdown passes to Robert Clark and Willie Green. Tight end Derek Tennell set up Green's touchdown with a recovery of an onside kick.

"That was the most exciting game I've been in—by far," Peete said.

It was exciting for San Diego and Tampa Bay, too, as the two teams finally won their first games of the season. The Chargers surprised the Raiders in Los Angeles 21-13 and the Buccaneers edged the Eagles 14-13 in Tampa.



Courtland W. Richards

Chris Chandler came off the bench to throw 2 fourth-quarter touchdown passes and rally Tampa Bay to a 14-13 victory over the struggling Eagles.

The Chargers, who had lost eight regular-season games in a row, were nursing a 14-13 fourth-quarter lead when linebacker Henry Rolling scooped up a Roger Craig fumble on the San Diego 34-yard line and returned it 53 yards to the Raiders' 13. Four plays later, John Friesz passed 2 yards to Marion Butts for a touchdown.

Later in the quarter, Rolling killed another Los Angeles drive with an interception.

The Eagles, muddling along without injured quarterbacks Randall Cunningham and Jim McMahon, started rookie Brad Goebel against Tampa Bay, and had a 13-0 fourth-quarter lead on two field goals and linebacker Seth Joyner's fumble recovery in the end zone.

But Tampa Bay's Chris Chandler, who came off the bench to replace Vinny Testaverde, threw 2 short touchdown passes in the last 4:19—to running back Robert Wilson and wide receiver Bruce Hill—to win the game. Linebacker Broderick Thomas set up the first touchdown by tackling punter Jeff Feagles at the Eagles' 8-yard line.

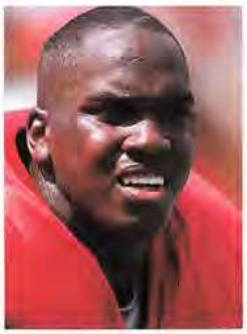
Indianapolis and Cincinnati stayed winless, however, falling to the Steelers and Seahawks, respectively. The Colts, who lost 21-3, were playing their first game under former defensive coordinator Rick Venturi.

Indianapolis led 3-0 at halftime, but the Steelers won the second half 21-0 as Bubby Brister hit all 7 of his passes, including 21- and 24-yard touchdown strikes to tight end Eric Green and running back Barry Foster.

Seattle held off Cincinnati 13-7 when cornerback Dwayne Harper and safety Nesby Glasgow tackled James Brooks a few inches short of a first down on the Seahawks' 18 with 29 seconds left. John L. Williams scored the only Seattle touchdown on a 35-yard, first-quarter run.

At New England, Dan Marino threw touchdown passes to Mark Clayton and Jim Jensen in the final 1:22 of the first half, and the Dolphins thumped the Patriots 20-10. Linebacker E.J. Junior had 4 of Miami's 6 sacks. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK



Thomas had 4 sacks.

AFC OFFENSE—Houston wide receiver **Ernest Givins** caught 5 passes for 151 yards and set up a touchdown with a 49-yard catch as the Oilers smashed Denver 42-14.

AFC DEFENSE—Kansas City linebacker **Derrick Thomas** sacked Jim Kelly 4 times, had 1 other tackle, forced 2 fumbles to set up 10 points, and had a quarterback hurry in the Chiefs' surprising 33-6 rout of the Bills.

NFC OFFENSE—**Rodney Hampton** rushed for a career-high 137 yards and a touchdown to lead the Giants to a 20-9 victory over Phoenix.

NFC DEFENSE—Washington linebacker **Wilber Marshall** had 13 tackles, including 9 solos (1 for a loss), intercepted a pass, and had a quarterback hurry to help spur the Redskins past the Bears 20-7.

Allen Dean Steele

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Hampton paced the Giants.

EMMITT SMITH'S MOVES MAKE COWBOYS MOVE

As the fourth-ranked passer in the NFL, Troy Aikman was one of the big reasons the Dallas Cowboys were taking aim at their first playoff berth in six years.

But Aikman put his passing finger on the biggest reason for the team's improvement after the Cowboys' sixth game.

"There is no question, our success is based on Emmitt [Smith] running the ball," Aikman said.

The 22-year-old Smith already had run through six teams for 639 yards, just 1 yard behind NFL rushing leader Barry Sanders of Detroit.

Smith and the Cowboys have become playoff contenders.

The 5-foot-9, 203-pound Smith also had scored 4 touchdowns, caught 26 passes for another touchdown, averaged 5 yards per carry, and posted four 100-yard games. Everyone was talking about how elusive Smith was.

"He has eyes in the back of his head," Dallas safety James Washington said. "That's what people can't figure out. Everyone doesn't see those eyes back there, but I do. That guy has got some vision."

"I don't always carry out my fakes as well as I should," Aikman admitted, "because I want to see what Emmitt does with the ball."

What Smith did with it in week 6 was carry a career-high 32 times for 122 yards as the Cowboys stopped Green Bay 20-17 for their third consecutive victory. And Green Bay spent much of the game crowding the line to stop the run.

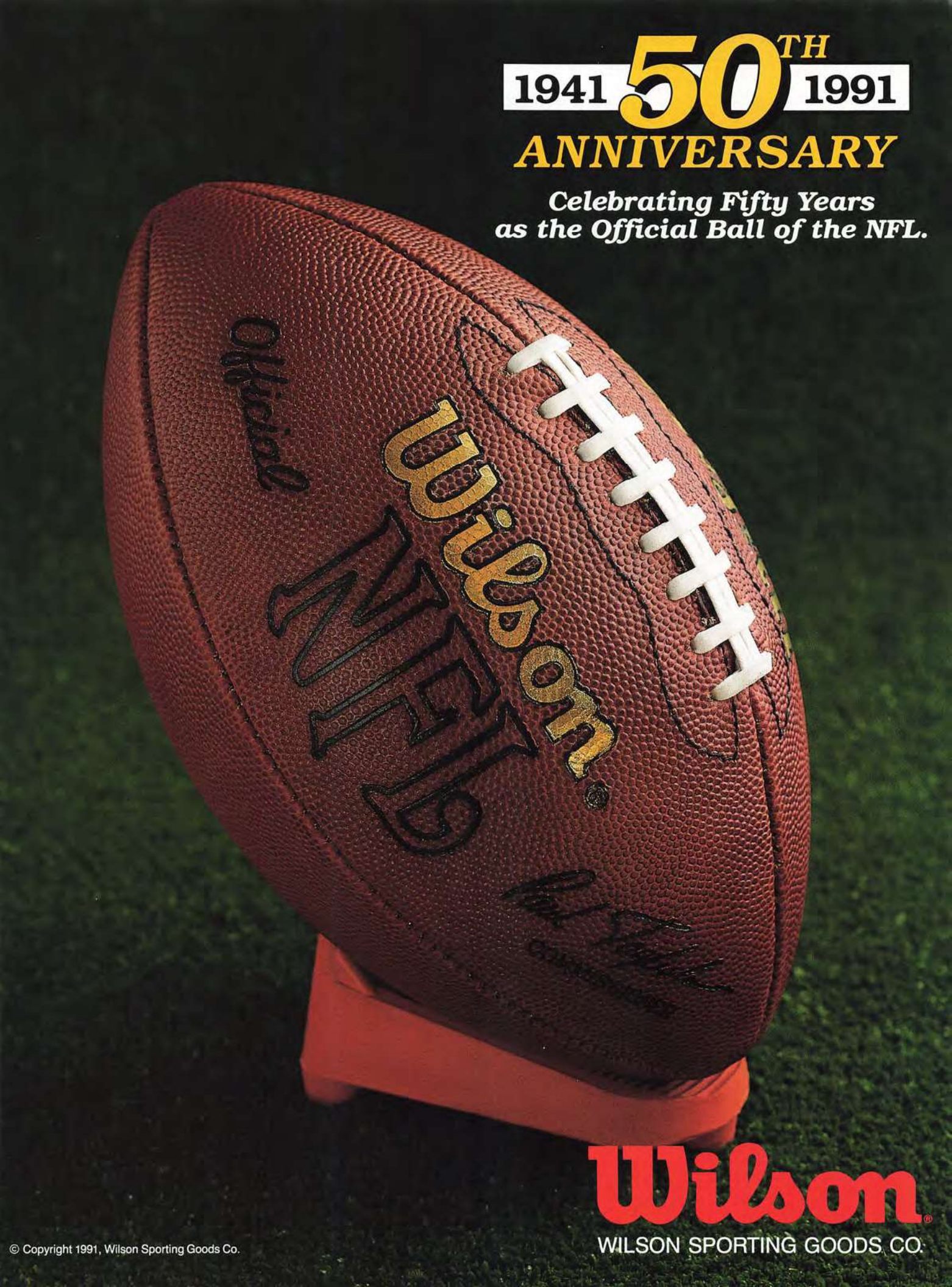
Two weeks earlier, against Phoenix, Smith ran for 182 yards, scoring on 60- and 12-yard runs and setting up the clinching field goal with a 37-yard, fourth-quarter burst.

"Emmitt's got a little of [Herschel] Walker in him and a lot of young [Tony] Dorsett," former Dallas linebacker Garth Jax said. "He's elusive. He causes you to miss tackles."

Smith's coach, Jimmy Johnson, agreed.

"He's the type of back who puts you on the edge of your seat every time he touches the football," Johnson said.

Bob Rosato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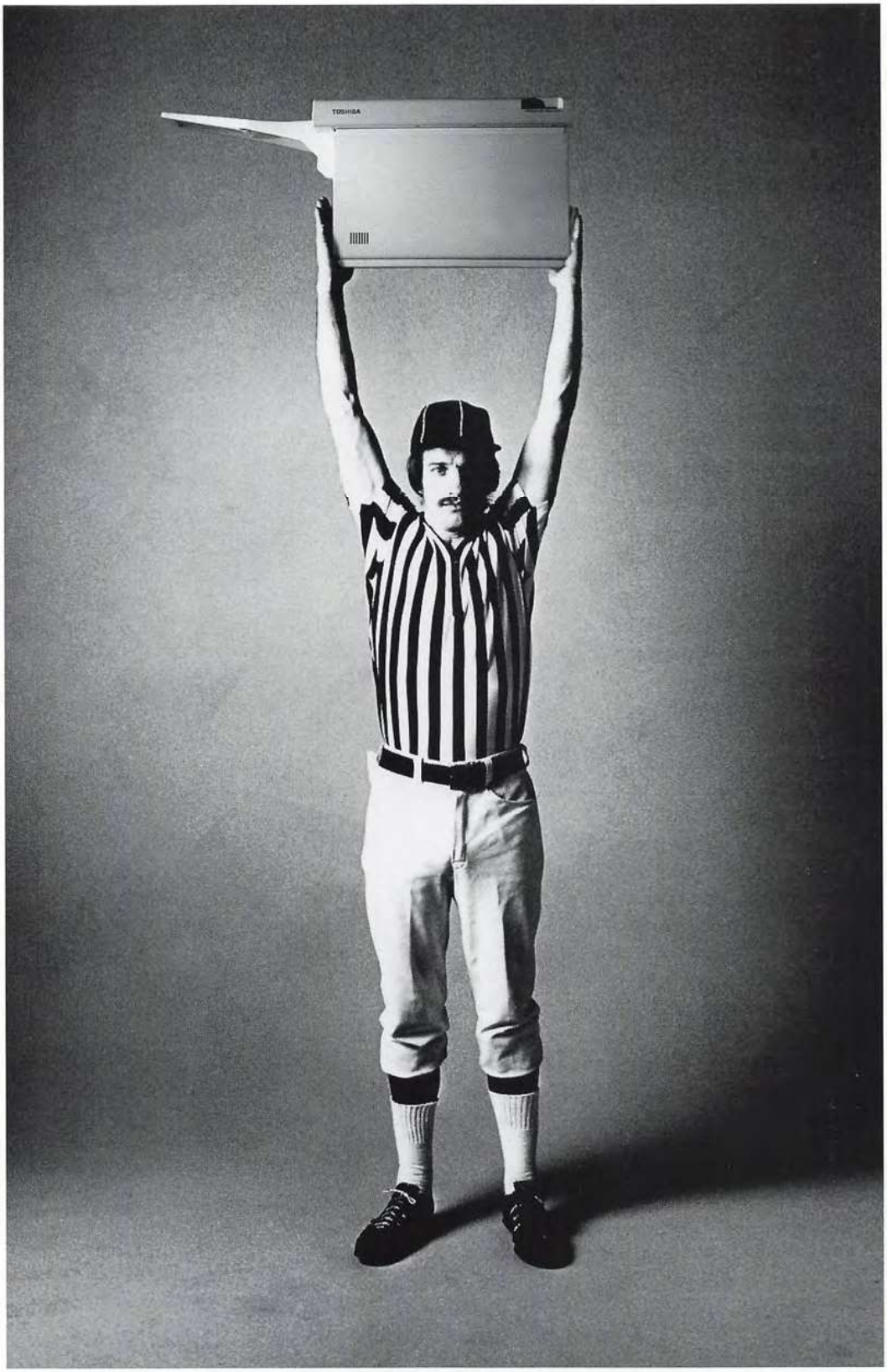

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WEEK 7

OCTOBER 13

After a Few Words by Coach Shell, Raiders Come Back to Win; 49ers, Steelers Also Rally, but Lose

Seattle is a pretty city—but for the Raiders lately, it has been pretty awful.

After coming to Los Angeles in 1982, the Raiders lost seven of their next nine games in Seattle—and in week 7 they were on track to lose again. When they shuffled off the field at halftime, they had committed 5 turnovers and trailed the Seahawks 17-0.

"I used some choice words," Raiders coach Art Shell said of his halftime talk. "I said, 'What are you going to do? Are we going to die? You have to challenge yourselves.' I told them our heads are bloodied—but not bowed."

Thus motivated, the Raiders charged out in the second half to score 17 successive points to tie the game. Then they tied it again at 20-20 on Jeff Jaeger's 49-yard field goal with one second remaining, and, finally, won it 23-20 in overtime on a 37-yard field goal by Jaeger.

That game was one of three big comebacks in week 7, but the Steelers, who rallied from a 20-0 deficit against the Giants, and the 49ers, who overcame a 17-0 deficit against Atlanta, both wound up losing.

Meanwhile, Washington and New Orleans refused to lose to anyone, stretching their unbeaten records to 7-0 and 6-0, respectively.

The Raiders beat the Seahawks by scoring on five of their six possessions in the second half and overtime. Rookie Nick Bell ran for 68 yards after intermission, while Jay Schroeder drilled short touchdown passes to Ethan Horton and Tim Brown. Brown's catch tied the score at 17-17 with 6:10 left in regulation.

After the Seahawks regained the lead at 20-17 on rookie John Kasay's 45-yard field goal with 2:04 remaining, the Raiders drove 53 yards to Jaeger's tying field goal. His winning kick in overtime was set up by safety Ronnie Lott's diving interception at the Seattle 19.

"This is the best comeback win in regular season that I've ever been a part of," Lott said.

Pittsburgh's 20-point comeback was even more impressive, but the Steelers lost to the Giants 23-20 on Matt Bahr's 44-yard field goal with four seconds left.

The Giants were leading 20-0 in the third quarter when second-year quarterback Neil O'Donnell replaced Steelers starter Bubby Brister, who was hobbled by a knee injury. On four successive series, O'Donnell led the Steelers to 2 field goals and threw 2 touchdown passes. His 16-yard strike to Louis Lipps made it 20-13 with 4:37 remaining, and his 5-yard pass to tight end Eric Green tied the score at 20-20 with 50 seconds left.

But Pittsburgh had scored a bit too early. Starting from the Giants' own 40 after the kickoff went out of

Standings								Scores
AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T	AFC
Buffalo	6	1	0	Washington	7	0	0	Buffalo 42, Indianapolis 6
Miami	3	4	0	Dallas	5	2	0	Houston 23, N.Y. Jets 20
N.Y. Jets	3	4	0	N.Y. Giants	4	3	0	Kansas City 42, Miami 7
New England	2	4	0	Philadelphia	3	4	0	L.A. Raiders 23, Seattle 20 (OT)
Indianapolis	0	7	0	Phoenix	3	4	0	
AFC Central				NFC Central				NFC
Houston	5	1	0	Detroit	5	1	0	Atlanta 39, San Francisco 34
Pittsburgh	3	3	0	Chicago	4	2	0	Minnesota 34, Phoenix 7
Cleveland	2	4	0	Minnesota	3	4	0	New Orleans 13, Philadelphia 6
Cincinnati	0	6	0	Green Bay	1	5	0	
AFC West				Tampa Bay	1	5	0	Interconference
Kansas City	5	2	0	NFC West				Dallas 35, Cincinnati 23
Denver	4	2	0	New Orleans	6	0	0	L.A. Rams 30, San Diego 24
L.A. Raiders	4	3	0	Atlanta	3	3	0	N.Y. Giants 23, Pittsburgh 20
Seattle	3	4	0	L.A. Rams	3	3	0	Washington 42, Cleveland 17
San Diego	1	6	0	San Francisco	2	4	0	

Richard Gentile

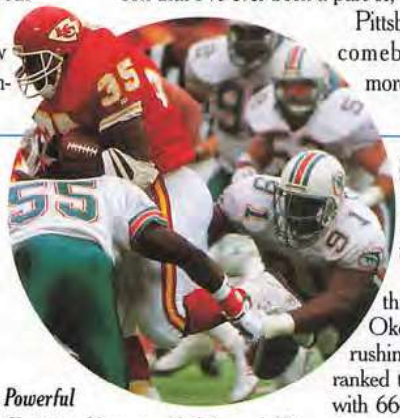
Washington rookie Ricky Ervins ran for 133 yards in the second half as the Redskins blasted Cleveland 42-17. He scored on 12- and 65-yard runs.

A NIGHTMARE AT ARROWHEAD

The first time the Kansas City Chiefs had the ball against Miami, they sent Christian Okoye into the line on five successive plays.

Okoye ran 5, 7, 13, 5, and, finally, 38 yards for the touchdown that sent the streaking Chiefs to a shocking 42-7 victory over the Dolphins. It was Miami's worst loss since 1970, head coach Don Shula's first year with the club.

It was the second consecutive game that Okoye and the rest of the Chiefs' offense had caved in a defense. Once affectionately referred to by a teammate as "The Nigerian Nightmare" (he was born in Nigeria), the 6-foot-1, 260-pound Okoye ran for 153 yards and 2 touchdowns against the Dolphins. A week earlier, he surged for 130 and 2 more scores in a 33-6 rout of previously unbeaten Buffalo.



Powerful Christian Okoye rumbled through Miami for 153 yards and 2 touchdowns.

After seven weeks, Okoye and the Chiefs were 5-2, had won four in a row, and held a half-game lead on Denver in the AFC West.

"The offensive line was all fired up," Okoye said of the Miami game. "They said, 'Come on, man, let's keep running the ball.'"

"We're definitely doing some good things up front with the offensive line," quarterback Steve DeBerg said. "This is the best offensive line I've played with. And I think we're the best team in the league at running back."

In fact, the Chiefs were three-deep at running back. Okoye, who led the NFL in rushing in 1989 with 1,480 yards, ranked third in the league in 1991 with 664 and had scored 7 touchdowns. Rookie Harvey Williams burned Buffalo for 103 yards. Barry Word, who was having trouble getting enough work, was a returning 1,000-yard rusher from 1990.

The Chiefs also hit Miami with 3 touchdown passes from DeBerg, including 2 to rookie Tim Barnett, plus a demoralizing 100-yard fumble return for a touchdown by linebacker Chris Martin.

"Nobody worries about personal glory on this team," Martin said. "My joy will come when we win the Super Bowl."

Ben Weddle

bounds and the Steelers were hit with a 5-yard penalty for Green's end-zone celebration, Jeff Hostetler passed to Dave Meggett for 16 yards and scrambled for 18 more to set up Bahr's winning field goal.

"I'd like us to play a complete game, and we didn't," Giants head coach Ray Handley said. "But I'll take a win any week."

So would the 49ers, whose record fell to 2-4 after a 39-34 loss to Atlanta—equaling the number of regular-season losses they had in 1989 and 1990 combined.

It was a bad week all around for San Francisco. On Wednesday night, quarterback Joe Montana, who had not played this season, had surgery on his right elbow for a torn tendon and was declared out for the year.

Offense, however, was not the 49ers' problem against the Falcons. Steve Young passed for 348 yards and 2 touchdowns (54- and 57-yard bombs to John Taylor and Jerry Rice), ran for 2 scores, and rallied the 49ers from a 17-0 second-quarter deficit to a 34-33 lead early in the fourth quarter.

QUOTE

Bills nose tackle Gary Baldinger, discussing the problems of going head-to-head with his brother Brian, a center for the Colts:

"I can't insult his family."

Mary Rubin

But Atlanta's Steve Broussard, who rushed for 104 yards, set up 2 field goals by Norm Johnson with 36- and 23-yard runs to give the Falcons the victory.

Atlanta had a lot of other heroes, including former 49ers cornerback Tim McKyer, who intercepted 2 passes in the final 2:23 to preserve the win; Deion Sanders, who returned a kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown; Johnson, who kicked 4 field goals; Chris Miller, who threw 3 touchdown passes; and Andre Rison, who caught 2 of them.

"It was a great game, a wild game, and a heck of a lot of fun," Miller said.

In Philadelphia, it wasn't a lot of fun, it was a lot of hard work, as the Saints and Eagles slugged it out in a defensive battle.

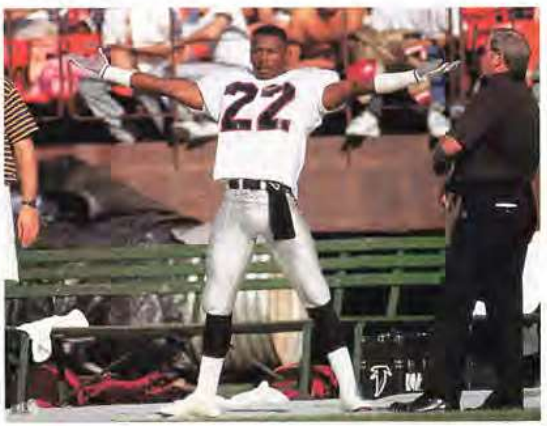
New Orleans prevailed 13-6 to stay unbeaten and make it eight regular-season victories in a row, dating back to 1990.

The Saints intercepted 5 passes by rookie Brad Goebel and Pat Ryan, sacked the two quarterbacks 5 times, and scored all 13 of their points after 2 interceptions and a fumble recovery. Their defense had not allowed a touchdown in 16 quarters.

New Orleans quarterback Bobby Hebert left the game with a mild concussion in the second quarter, but Steve Walsh threw a 14-yard, third-quarter pass to Dalton Hilliard for the winning touchdown.

In Washington, the unbeaten Redskins, who had shut out their first three home opponents, yielded 2 touchdowns to Cleveland (1 on safety Vince Newsome's 37-yard fumble return), but still blew away the Browns 42-17. The victory boosted Washington's record to 7-0 for the first time since 1940.

After Newsome's fumble return cut the score to 21-17 in the third quarter, rookie Ricky Ervins replaced Earnest Byner (who had suffered a bruised bone in his right hand) and ran for 133 yards and 2 touchdowns in the rest of the second half.



Ex-49ers cornerback Tim McKyer intercepted 2 passes to help the Falcons defeat San Francisco, then showed off to the fans in Candlestick Park.

Dave Stock

Ervins not only scored on 12- and 65-yard runs, he also set up his first touchdown with a 46-yard kickoff return.

Art Monk also helped out with 7 catches for 104 yards, including a diving 14-yard catch for a touchdown. The big day moved Monk up to second on the NFL's all-time pass-receiving list with 756 receptions.

In Minneapolis, quarterback Rich Gannon started his second consecutive game for slumping Wade Wilson and led the Vikings to a 34-7 victory over Phoenix. Gannon threw touchdown passes to Cris Carter and Anthony Carter and scrambled 18 yards for another score as the Vikings snapped a three-game losing streak.

The Vikings also sacked Phoenix quarterback Tom Tupa 5 times, 3 by second-year defensive end John Randle and 2 by end Chris Doleman.

Rams quarterback Jim Everett was so excited when he hit tight end Jim Price with an 18-yard, second-quarter touchdown pass against San Diego—his first scoring pass of the season—that he raced to the sideline to give head coach John Robinson a bear hug.

Everett later threw a 12-yard touchdown pass to Price and completed 18-of-19 attempts over one stretch to lead the Rams past the Chargers 30-24.

San Diego's John Friesz passed for 306 yards, including 30- and 49-yard touchdown passes to Anthony Miller and Nate Lewis. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

Jeffires was always open.

AFC OFFENSE—Houston wide receiver **Haywood Jeffires** caught a club-record-tying 13 passes from Warren Moon for 186 yards in the Oilers' 23-20 conquest of the New York Jets. Moon passed for 423 yards and 2 touchdowns.

AFC DEFENSE—Raiders cornerback **Lionel Washington** intercepted 2 passes to snuff out a pair of Seattle scoring opportunities and made 4 tackles as Los Angeles won 23-20.

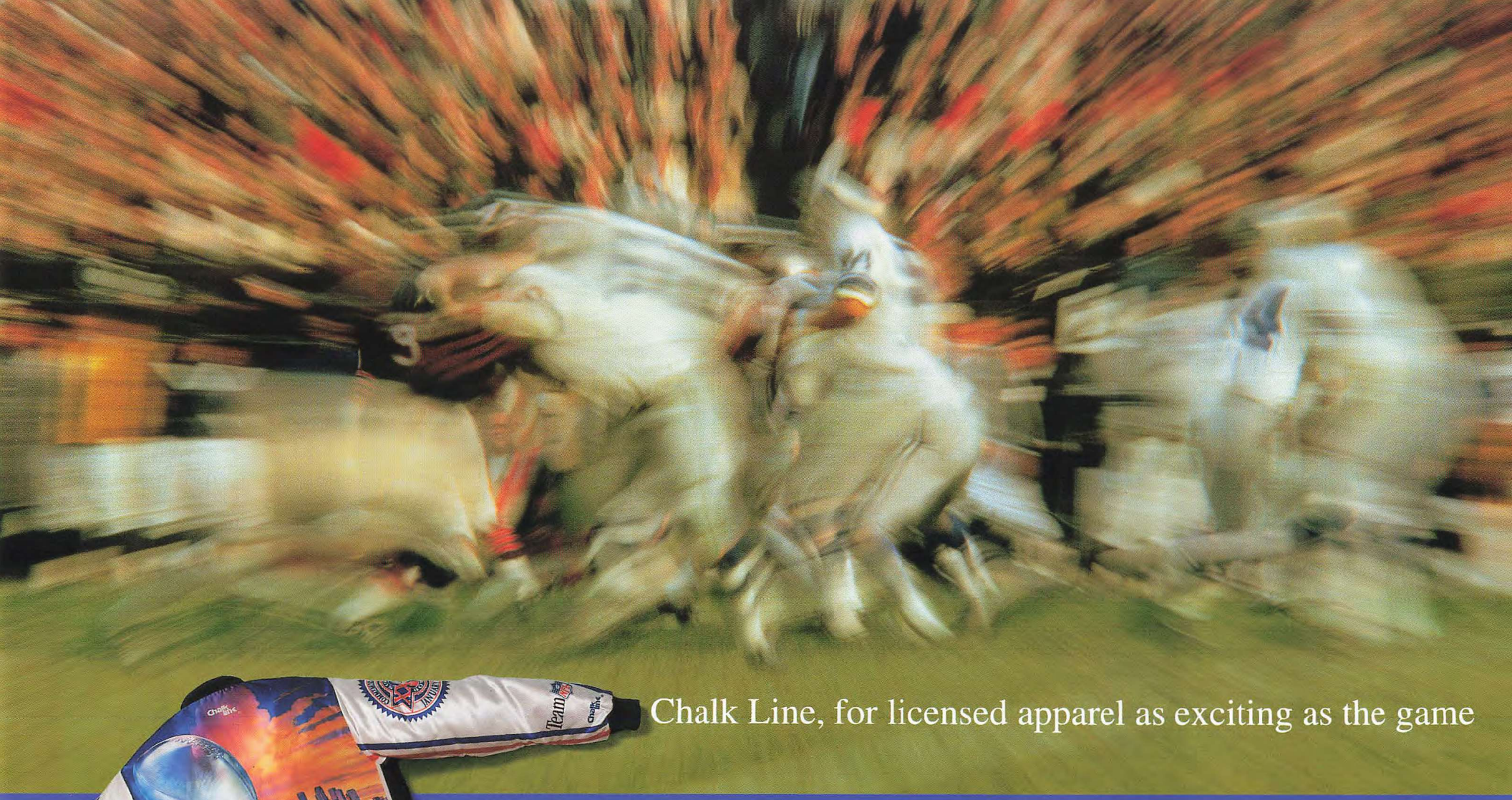
NFC OFFENSE—Washington wide receiver **Art Monk** caught 7 passes for 104 yards and a touchdown to help the Redskins overpower Cleveland 42-17. With a career total of 756 catches, Monk passed Charlie Joiner to move into second place on the NFL's all-time receiving list.

NFC DEFENSE—Minnesota end **Chris Doleman** had 8 tackles, including 2 sacks, forced a fumble, and recovered another fumble as the Vikings routed the Cardinals 34-7.

Jerry Liebman

Doleman led the Vikings.

Mark Brettingen



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WEEK 6

OCTOBER 17

Unbeaten Saints March to Different Tune in Silver Anniversary Season; Bills, Oilers Continue Hot Pace

It used to be a big deal when the Saints won a game. This season, it would be a big deal if they lose one.

After seven games, the team that did not have a winning record in the first 20 years of its existence (1967-1986), had gone 7-0 and posted nine successive regular-season wins, dating back to 1990. The Saints' latest victory was a 23-7 rout of Tampa Bay.

"It sounds funny for a New Orleans player to say it, but we expect to win, no matter what, no matter who we play," wide receiver Eric Martin said.

Mike Fabus

Dave Krieg, out with a broken thumb since the first game, returned to lead Seattle to victory over Pittsburgh. He completed 25 of 31 passes.

While the Saints and idle Washington Redskins were both 7-0, Buffalo and Houston kept winning, too, improving to 7-1 and 6-1, respectively. The Bills overpowered winless Cincinnati 35-16, while the Oilers held off Miami 17-13.

In New Orleans, Saints quarterback Bobby Hebert was on the bench with a bruised right shoulder, but Steve Walsh made his first start of the year and passed for 205 yards, including an 8-yard scoring pass to Martin.

"I don't look at myself as a backup," Walsh said. "I started eleven games last year, and I regard myself as a starter."

Meanwhile, the Saints' NFL-leading defense sacked Tampa Bay's Chris Chandler 6 times and set up a pair of touchdowns and a field goal with interceptions by safety Brett Maxie and cornerback Toi Cook, and a fumble recovery by cornerback Vince Buck.

Chandler did throw a 5-yard, scoring pass to fullback Robert Wilson in the third quarter. It was the first touchdown allowed by the Saints' defense in 18 quarters.

On Monday night, Buffalo's Jim Kelly threw interceptions on each of the Bills' first three possessions, but Cincinnati scored only a single field goal after those gifts. Kelly rebounded to pass for 392 yards and 5 touchdowns in his team's rout. It was Buffalo's fifteenth successive win at home.

Two of Kelly's touchdown passes were 74- and 48-yard bombs to 35-year-old James Lofton. Tight end Pete Metzelaars (51 yards), wide receiver Andre Reed (24 yards), and running back Thurman Thomas (5 yards) also caught touchdown passes.

In defeat, Cincinnati controlled the ball for more than 37 minutes, mostly on the legs of Harold Green, who rushed for 141 yards.

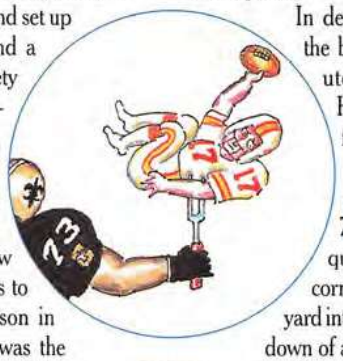
In Miami, the Oilers and Dolphins combined for 7 turnovers in the second quarter, including Houston cornerback Darryll Lewis's 33-yard interception return for a touchdown of a Dan Marino pass.

But, trailing just 17-13 in the fourth quarter, the Dolphins were bidding for a come-from-behind victory when Sammie Smith lost a fumble at the Houston goal line on a first-down dive with 3:10 left.

The ball was stripped by linebacker Lamar Lathon and recovered in the end zone by cornerback Cris Dishman, who was on a defensive hot streak. In the last six games, Dishman

Bob Rosato

Miami lost to Houston when Sammie Smith (33) fumbled into the end zone with 3:10 left as the Dolphins were bidding to take the lead. Cornerback Cris Dishman recovered the ball for the Oilers.



QUOTE

Saints defensive end Frank Warren, after sacking Tampa Bay quarterback Chris Chandler 2½ times:

"To me, the quarterback looks like a piece of prime rib—big, juicy, and ready to eat."

Mary Rubin

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

Lott stopped the Rams.

AFC OFFENSE—Bills wide receiver **James Lofton** caught 8 passes for a career-high 220 yards as Buffalo smashed Cincinnati 35-16. Lofton had 74- and 48-yard touchdown catches.

AFC DEFENSE—Raiders safety **Ronnie Lott** intercepted 2 passes in the last 6:22 to (1) stop a Rams drive and set up the tying touchdown, and (2) set up the winning field goal in his team's 20-17 victory over the Rams. Lott also had 3 tackles.

NFC OFFENSE—San Francisco quarterback **Steve Young** completed 18 of 20 passes for 2 touchdowns and ran for 40 yards to lead the 49ers to a surprisingly easy 35-3 victory over Detroit. The loss snapped the Lions' five-game winning streak.

NFC DEFENSE—Phoenix safety **Tim McDonald** intercepted 2 passes in the last four minutes and made 6 tackles to help the Cardinals hold off Atlanta 16-10.

Paul Jasienski

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Young ran and passed the 49ers to victory.

had forced a fumble, intercepted 4 passes, and recovered Smith's fumble. Houston took over on the 20 and ran out the clock.

Smith and the Dolphins were crushed. Smith had fumbled on the goal line the week before, too, and Kansas City's Chris Martin returned that one 100 yards for a touchdown.

"It's just such a bitter thing to happen to a guy, and nobody feels worse than he does," Miami head coach Don Shula said. "But he's got to protect the ball down there. You know you're going to get hit. You've got to be able to handle it."

In Pittsburgh, Dave Krieg was able to handle the pressure of his first game back from injury. The Seahawks' quarterback, out since opening day with a broken thumb on his passing hand, completed 25 of 31 attempts for 266 yards and a pair of touchdowns as Seattle hammered Pittsburgh 27-7.

"It was fun to be back in there," Krieg said.

It was fun for Ronnie Lott, too. The Raiders' safety set up the winning field goal with an interception for the second week in a row as his team edged the Rams 20-17 on Jeff Jaeger's 34-yard kick with two seconds left.

Lott, who has 54 interceptions in his career, had 2 in the last 6:22 to ruin an otherwise good day for the Rams' Jim Everett, who passed for 300 yards and 2 touchdowns.

Lott stopped a Rams' drive with a leaping interception in the end zone to set up the tying touchdown drive, then intercepted another pass on the Rams' 39 with 3:07 left to set up the winning kick. Everett's pass bounced off defensive end Howie Long's helmet.

"I guess it proves that I've got a four-leaf clover in my pocket," Lott said.

New England's Jason Staurovsky was lucky, too—lucky to get a second chance. He missed a 36-yard field-goal attempt early in overtime, but connected from 42 yards as time ran out to lift the Patriots over the Vikings 26-23.

Patriots quarterback Hugh Millen completed 5 of 6 passes on the winning field-goal drive, which was set up by cornerback David Pool's fumble recovery at New England's 20.

Millen passed for 326 yards and a touchdown in the game, while Minnesota's Rich Gannon, who had a club-record 63 attempts, completed 35 for 317 yards and a score.

There was another overtime game in San Diego, but it ended on a defensive play. Halfway through the extra period, the Browns whipped the Chargers 30-24 on linebacker David Brandon's 30-yard interception return for a touchdown off John Friesz. Brandon, a Charger for four years, signed with the Browns after the 1990 season as a Plan B free agent.

The unlucky Chargers, whose kicker, John Carney, missed a 48-yard field goal on the last play of regulation, suffered their fifth loss by 6 or fewer points.

Cleveland's Bernie Kosar threw a 15-yard touchdown pass to running back Leroy Hoard that tied the score at 24-24 with 4:09 left in regulation. He also broke a team record by running his streak of passes without an interception to 233.

In Indianapolis, Ken O'Brien got the Jets off to a 7-0, first-quarter lead with a 47-yard, flea-flicker touchdown pass to Rob Moore, and New York went on to beat winless Indianapolis 17-6. The Colts had not scored a touchdown in their last four games.

"Maybe we're trying too hard," Colts quarterback Jeff George said. ■

Joel Zwink

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	7	1	0	Washington	7	0	0
Miami	4	4	0	Dallas	5	2	0
N.Y. Jets	3	4	0	N.Y. Giants	4	3	0
New England	3	5	0	Phoenix	4	4	0
Indianapolis	0	8	0	Philadelphia	3	4	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	6	1	0	Detroit	5	2	0
Pittsburgh	3	4	0	Chicago	5	2	0
Cleveland	3	4	0	Minnesota	3	5	0
Cincinnati	0	7	0	Green Bay	1	6	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	1	6	0
Denver	5	2	0	NFC West			
Kansas City	5	3	0	New Orleans	7	0	0
L.A. Raiders	5	3	0	Atlanta	3	4	0
Seattle	4	4	0	L.A. Rams	3	4	0
San Diego	1	7	0	San Francisco	3	4	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 35, Cincinnati 16
Cleveland 30, San Diego 24 (OT)
Denver 19, Kansas City 16
Houston 17, Miami 13
N.Y. Jets 17, Indianapolis 6
Seattle 27, Pittsburgh 7
NFC
Chicago 10, Green Bay 0
Phoenix 16, Atlanta 10
New Orleans 23, Tampa Bay 7
San Francisco 35, Detroit 3
Interconference
L.A. Raiders 20, L.A. Rams 17
New England 26, Minnesota 23 (OT)

AT MILE HIGH, ELWAY THROWS A MILE DEEP

In the battle for first place in the AFC West, Denver and Kansas City were tied 16-16 with a little more than four minutes left in the game. The Broncos were in a precarious spot, stuck on their own 13-yard line in a third-and-17 situation.

Elway bombed Kansas City.

But, on a planned scramble, Denver's John Elway rolled to his right, stopped suddenly, and threw back across the field for a 71-yard completion to Mark Jackson. It was estimated the ball traveled 61 yards in the air.

"I can't remember when I've thrown it that hard," Elway said.

"Not many quarterbacks would be able to throw the ball that far, but it's the type of play John has made over and over," Jackson said.

Three plays after Jackson carried the ball to the Chiefs' 16, David Treadwell kicked a 27-yard field goal, his fourth of the game, and Denver held on to win 19-16, taking over first place. The loss snapped the Chiefs' four-game winning streak.

It also brought back memories of the two teams' Monday night game in 1990.

That night, the Broncos trailed 23-21 with about a minute left and faced fourth-and-10 on their own 17. But Elway drilled a 49-yard pass to Vance Johnson to set up Treadwell's last-play field goal, and Denver won again 24-23.

The Broncos needed every one of Elway's 270 passing yards in 1991, too, including his 22-yard touchdown pass to rookie wide receiver Derek Russell with just 11 seconds left in the first half. Denver had to play without injured leading rusher Gaston Green.

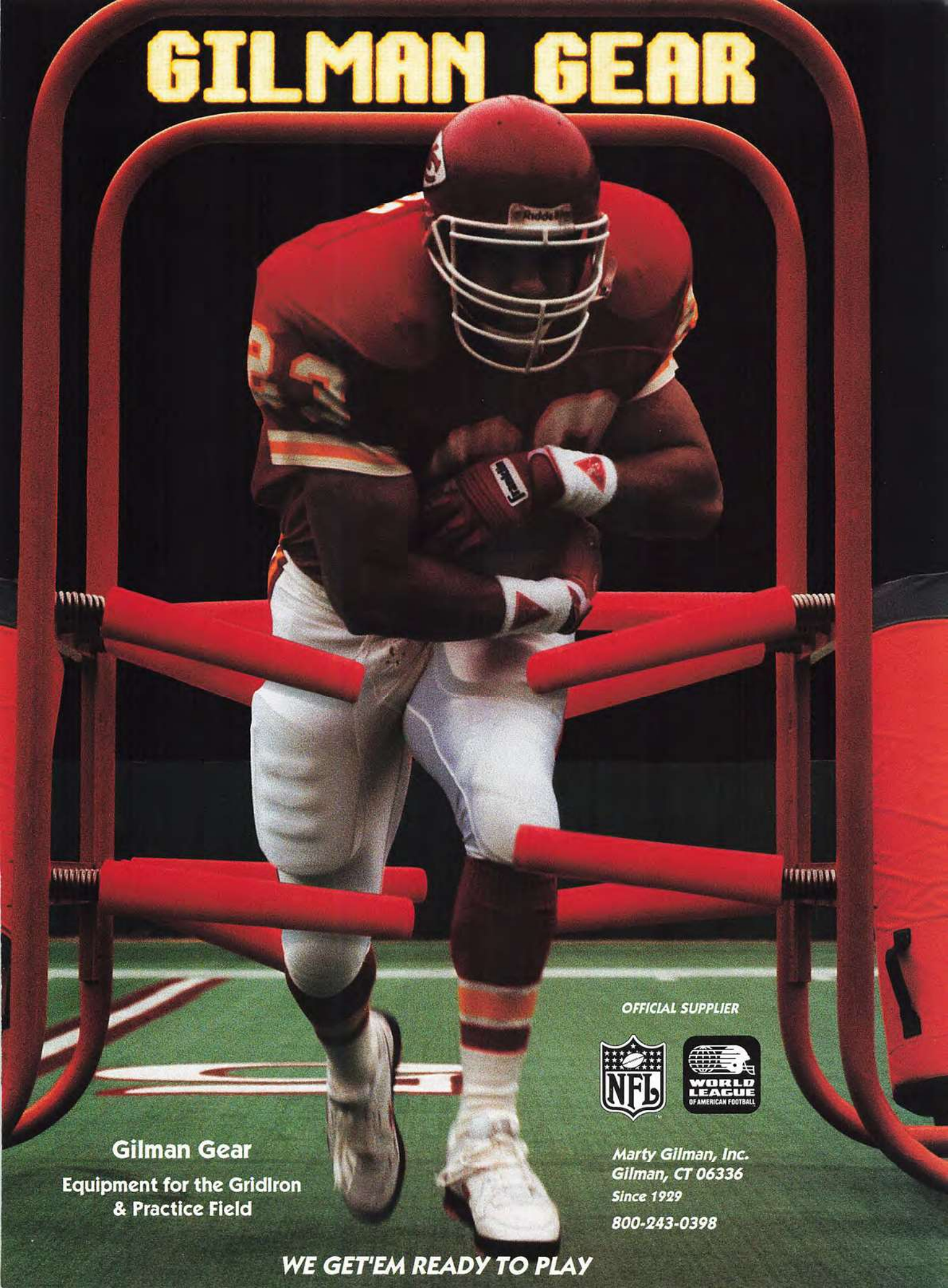
"This was a big game for us to win, especially against such a good team," Elway said. "The defense kept us in the game. They played great and shut down the run."

Kansas City head coach Marty Schottenheimer, whose career record against Denver fell to 1-7, was not surprised by the quarterback who beat him again.

"Elway has the ability to throw the ball anywhere on the field he wants to," Schottenheimer said.

William R. Sallaz

Cleveland beat San Diego in overtime when linebacker David Brandon (58) intercepted a pass intended for Nate Lewis (81) and returned it for a score.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WEEK 9

OCTOBER 27

On the Way to 8-0, Redskins Snap Losing Streak Against Giants; Bears Hand Saints First Defeat

The Washington Redskins were off to a 7-0 start, but they weren't too happy about another number—their record against the Giants since 1987.

Washington had lost six consecutive games to New York in the previous three years, and, after 30 minutes of their first meeting this season, the Redskins were on the way to losing seven in a row.

Playing at home on Sunday night, the inspired Giants scored the first two times they had the ball and walked off the field at halftime leading in yards (207-35), plays (36-16), and points (13-0) over the NFL's final unbeaten team this season.

New Orleans, which also started the season 7-0, had lost to the Bears earlier in the day, 20-17.

"They really dominated us," Redskins Pro Bowl tackle Jim Lachey said of the Giants in the first half. "But we didn't get to be 7-0 by giving up in the second half."

Indeed. The Redskins charged out after intermission and drove 84, 52, and 62 yards yards for 2 touchdowns and a field goal, shut out the Giants, and won 17-13. In the process, they outgained the Giants in the second half 219-64.

"We feel like we got the monkey off our backs—finally," defensive end Charles Mann said. "This feels real satisfying."

Two of the most satisfied Redskins were quarterback Mark Rypien and wide receiver Gary Clark, who teamed up on 7- and 54-yard touchdown passes. Rookie Ricky Ervins gave the offense a big boost by carrying 20 times for 82 yards, all in the second half.

Jim Turner

Gary Clark celebrated his 54-yard touchdown catch, which put the Redskins ahead for good in their 17-13 comeback victory over the Giants.

In New Orleans, the unbeaten Saints chased Chicago quarterback Jim Harbaugh all over the Superdome for the first 58 minutes of the game. They sacked him 3 times, hit him several other times, and held him to 2 completions in his first 19 attempts and built a 17-13 lead.

But, with 1:54 left, Harbaugh got the ball at his own 48-yard line after Tommy Barnhardt's shanked 12-yard punt, and he quickly drove the Bears 52 yards in 4 plays to score the winning touchdown.

Only 54 seconds remained when Harbaugh threw a 12-yard touchdown pass over the middle to wide receiver Tom Waddle. Harbaugh was 3 for 3 on the winning drive.

"God bless the kid," Bears head coach Mike Ditka said. "I got mad at him a couple of times...but Good Lord, he's trying to make plays out there...I mean, he's playing for his life. That's a war zone."

Despite losing, the Saints outgained the Bears 313-178 and got 291 passing yards from Bobby Hebert, who threw 65- and 8-yard touchdown strikes to Floyd Turner. New Orleans also scored on a 60-yard field goal by Morten Andersen, which equaled the second-longest three-pointer in NFL history.

In Pontiac, the Lions stayed in a tie with the Bears for first place in the NFC Central Division with a 34-10 victory over Dallas, which snapped the Cowboys' four-game winning streak. But it was one of those good-news, bad-news days.

During Detroit's first series, quarterback Rodney Peete tore an Achilles tendon and was lost for the season.

The Lions played well despite the loss of Peete. Backup Erik Kramer, threw touchdown passes to Willie Green and Barry Sanders, while the defense scored 14 and set up 10 more points.

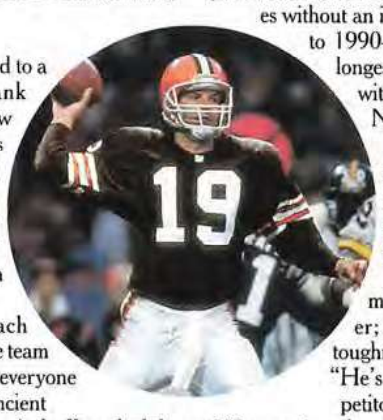
Safety William White raced 55 yards to score

BERNIE'S BACK...AND HE'S BROUGHT THE BROWNS WITH HIM

In his first five years in the NFL—before he had turned 27—Bernie Kosar led the Cleveland Browns to four division titles, five playoff appearances, and three AFC Championship Games.

Then came 1990.

As the Browns capsized to a 3-13 record, Kosar sank along with them. He threw only 10 touchdown passes and had a career-high 15 interceptions. He had his lowest passer rating ever (65.7), was sacked 37 times, and was even benched for a game.



Kosar had thrown 262 passes in a row without an interception.

When new head coach Bill Belichick took over the team in early 1991, he wanted everyone to know that 1990 was ancient history. He wasn't worried about Kosar.

"He's a helluva quarterback," Belichick said. "I'm glad to finally get him on my side."

Several months later, as the rejuvenated Browns hit the halfway mark of the season with a 4-4 record and a two-game winning streak after beating Pittsburgh 17-14, Kosar ranked second in the NFL in passing.

He had completed 64.2 percent of his attempts, fired 8 touchdown passes, and had not thrown an interception. In fact, the Browns' quarterback had a streak of 262 successive passes without an interception—dating back to 1990—which was the second-longest in NFL history. He was within sight of Bart Starr's NFL record of 294.

Kosar's accuracy was nothing new. His career interception ratio was 2.38, the lowest in NFL history.

Belichick not only admired Kosar's arm, however; he admired his mental toughness.

"He's one of the greatest competitors I've ever been around," the coach said. "He's just a tremendous fighter.

He does the right things, calls the right plays, and executes them under pressure."

Intelligence probably had a lot to do with it. Besides playing football as an undergraduate, Kosar graduated from the University of Miami in three years—with a double major in finance and economics.

Mike Fabus

with a blocked field goal (swatted down by defensive tackle Marc Spindler), and cornerback Ray Crockett raced 96 yards to score with an interception.

In Philadelphia, the hard-luck Eagles welcomed quarterback Jim McMahon back from a knee injury, and he threw a 19-yard touchdown pass to Keith Byars on the team's first series. But McMahon reinjured his knee and left the game—only to see backup Jeff Kemp suffer a concussion.

McMahon returned, but nothing seemed to help Philadelphia as the 49ers forced 5 turnovers, got 6 sacks, and won 23-7. Linebacker Charles Haley had 3 of the sacks, and end Larry Roberts added 2. It was Philadelphia's fourth successive loss.

"I don't think we're demoralized, but we are frustrated," McMahon said. "I think we're too good to be 3-5, but there isn't a whole lot we can do about that."

Two teams going in opposite directions met in Houston, and nothing changed. The Oilers, now 7-1, ran away from the Bengals 35-3. Cincinnati fell to 0-8. It was the fourth win in a row for Houston, which was off to its best start ever. Cincinnati played without injured quarterback Boomer Esiason.

Houston's Warren Moon was at his best, however, passing for 289 yards and 3 touchdowns, including a 61-yard bomb to Drew Hill. Oilers cornerback Cris Dishman, who set up a touchdown with an interception, extended his streak to seven consecutive games with a turnover or a forced turnover.

At New England, Denver's David Treadwell kicked a 34-yard field goal—his third of the game—to give the Broncos a 9-6 lead with 1:56 remaining in the game.

But the Patriots immediately marched 69 yards to the Broncos' 15 on the passing of Hugh Millen, before calling their final time out with 14 seconds left. Head coach Dick MacPherson decided to take one more shot at the end zone, and if that failed, settle for a field goal and overtime.

"If there's nothing there, throw it out of bounds," MacPherson told Millen.

Millen dropped back to pass, but seeing no open receivers, he took off and ran up the middle, gaining 9 yards. But linebacker Michael Brooks tackled him at the 6 with only 5 seconds remaining, and, before the Patriots could start another play, the game ended.

"It was my fault," a downcast Millen said. "I don't know what to say. I made a mistake."

Quarterback Jay Schroeder made a big mistake for the Raiders on Monday night in Kansas City, helping the Chiefs rally to win 24-21. Kansas City scored the decisive touchdown on Steve DeBerg's 6-yard pass to rookie Tim Barnett with 47 seconds left.

But, early in the fourth quarter, Los Angeles led 21-10 and had third-and-goal on the Chiefs' 6 when a harried Schroeder threw an interception to safety Lloyd Burruss. Burruss returned it 83 yards to set up Christian Okoye's 1-yard touchdown run that narrowed the Raiders' lead to four points. The Chiefs then drove 57 yards for the winning score.

In Seattle, the Seahawks made it four victories in five weeks as they beat San Diego 20-9. Chris Warren set up 10 points with 34- and 55-yard kickoff returns, while rookie John Kasay kicked 51- and 54-yard field goals. His 54-yarder tied the team record.

In Tampa, Green Bay forced 8 turnovers, got 6 sacks, and shut out the Buccaneers 27-0. The Packers' defense scored on linebacker Brian Noble's 1-yard fumble return and also set up 13 other points. ■

Betsy Peabody Rowe

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Kansas City quarterback **Steve DeBerg** passed for 2 touchdowns, including the game-winning 6-yard strike to rookie Tim Barnett with 47 seconds remaining, as he rallied the Chiefs to a 24-21 victory over the Raiders.

AFC DEFENSE—Cleveland linebacker **Clay Matthews** had 7 tackles, 1 sack, batted down 2 passes, and intercepted 1 at his own 45 with 1:07 left as the Browns held off the Steelers 17-14.

Diane Johnson

Matthews had 7 tackles.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Miller had 3 scoring passes.

NFC OFFENSE—Even though he left the game in the third quarter with a bruised knee, Atlanta quarterback **Chris Miller** passed for 3 touchdowns to lead the Falcons to a 31-14 victory over the Rams.

NFC DEFENSE—Detroit cornerback **Ray Crockett** made 8 tackles, broke up 4 passes, and returned an interception 96 yards for a touchdown as the Lions overwhelmed Dallas 34-10.

Although Detroit beat Dallas 34-10, the Lions' hopes for the NFC Central title were dealt a severe blow when inspirational quarterback Rodney Peete was lost for the season with a torn Achilles tendon.

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	7	1	0
Miami	4	4	0
N.Y. Jets	4	4	0
New England	3	5	0
Indianapolis	0	8	0
AFC Central			
Houston	7	1	0
Pittsburgh	4	4	0
Cleveland	3	5	0
Cincinnati	0	8	0
AFC West			
Denver	6	2	0
Kansas City	6	3	0
L.A. Raiders	5	4	0
Seattle	5	4	0
San Diego	1	8	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	8	0	0
Dallas	5	3	0
N.Y. Giants	4	4	0
Phoenix	4	5	0
Philadelphia	3	5	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	6	2	0
Detroit	6	2	0
Minnesota	4	5	0
Green Bay	2	6	0
Tampa Bay	1	7	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	7	1	0
Atlanta	4	4	0
L.A. Rams	4	4	0
San Francisco	3	5	0

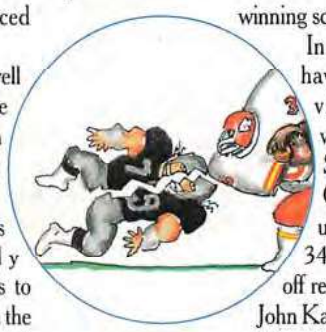
Scores

AFC

Cleveland 17, Pittsburgh 14
Denver 9, New England 6
Houston 35, Cincinnati 3
Kansas City 24, L.A. Raiders 21
Seattle 20, San Diego 9

NFC

Atlanta 31, L.A. Rams 14
Chicago 20, New Orleans 17
Detroit 34, Dallas 10
Green Bay 27, Tampa Bay 0
Minnesota 28, Phoenix 0
San Francisco 23, Philadelphia 7
Washington 17, N.Y. Giants 13



QUOTE

Raiders defensive tackle Bob Golic, asked what kind of stress 260-pound Chiefs running back Christian Okoye causes opposing linemen:

"Stress fractures, mostly."

Marv Rubin

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WEEK 10

NOVEMBER 3

Falcons, Jets Call on 'Hail Mary' Passes for Victories, but Redskins Survive on Lohmiller Hit After Oilers' Miss

It was an NFC-AFC matchup worthy of the Super Bowl, and it was about to come down to the last play.

Or so it seemed.

Unbeaten Washington (8-0) and once-beaten Houston (7-1) were tied 13-13 when the Oilers' Ian Howfield lined up to try a 33-yard field goal with four seconds left in the game. The NFL's last unbeaten team was a short field goal away from its first loss.

But Howfield had been inconsistent this season—and when he kicked the ball, it hooked wide to the left. With a second left on the clock, the Redskins had survived.

In overtime, they not only survived, they won when sure-footed Chip Lohmiller boomed a 41-yard field goal for a 16-13 victory. The winning kick was set up by cornerback Darrell Green's diving interception and 2-yard crawl to the Oilers' 31.

"I'm drained after last week [a comeback victory over the Giants] and now this," Redskins coach Joe Gibbs said. "These two teams are awfully close."

David Drapkin

The Oilers had a chance to snap Washington's winning streak, but Ian Howfield missed a 33-yard field goal with four seconds left in regulation.

A lot of other games were awfully close in week 10 of the season. Eight, in fact, were decided in the last two minutes or in overtime, with four particularly dramatic finishes.

In Atlanta, the Falcons stunned the 49ers 17-14 on Billy Joe Tolliver's 44-yard "Hail-Mary" touchdown pass with one second left. At the Meadowlands, the Jets nipped the Packers 19-16 in overtime on Pat Leahy's 37-yard field goal. In Cincinnati, the Bengals finally got their first victory when cornerback Eric Thomas blocked a field goal to preserve a 23-21 win over the Browns. And in Denver, the Broncos hung on for a 20-13 victory over the Steelers, when Pittsburgh tight end Eric Green dropped a potential touchdown pass with 41 seconds left.

The game in Washington was tied 6-6 early in the fourth quarter when the Redskins took a 13-6 lead on Earnest Byner's 23-yard touchdown run. Byner rushed for 112 yards during the afternoon.

But Warren Moon marched the Oilers 79 yards to Lorenzo White's 1-yard touchdown plunge to tie the game with 1:42 left. On the kickoff, Houston safety Mike Dumas recovered Brian Mitchell's fumble on the Washington 23 to set up the ill-fated field-goal attempt.

In Atlanta, the 49ers moved up and down the field, but led the Falcons just 14-10 with time running out in the game. In the first half, San Francisco's Mike Cofer missed 3 field goals and had 1 blocked.

The 49ers took their four-point lead when backup quarterback Steve Bono fired a 30-yard touchdown pass to John Taylor with 53 seconds to go in the game.

However, Atlanta quickly drove to the San Francisco 44, from where Tolliver, who replaced

PHILADELPHIA TURNS TO A MAC ATTACK

When the Eagles lost Pro Bowl quarterback Randall Cunningham for the season with a knee injury early in the season opener, 10-year veteran Jim McMahon took over and led the team to a 3-1 record.

Then McMahon suffered a knee injury (strained ligaments), and while he was recovering, the offense failed to score a touchdown in three consecutive losses.

When McMahon returned against the 49ers, he threw a touchdown pass on his first series. But he aggravated his knee injury, and, although he played most of the game, Philadelphia lost its fourth in a row.

So, on a 22-degree Monday night, when the Eagles faced the Giants with a 3-5 record, their season was at a crossroads.

But McMahon, who wore a brace on his injured leg, dissected the Giants' proud defense and led the Eagles to a 30-7 victory.

The poised 32-year-old quarterback passed for 229 yards, and the Eagles ran for 137 more. Philadelphia had been rushing for only 69 yards a game.

"I've said it many times," head coach Rich Kotite said after the game.

"McMahon raises the level of performance of the people around him. And he created some real big plays himself tonight."

McMahon turned back the clock.

One of those plays came when the Eagles led 3-0 in the second quarter. The gimpy-legged McMahon sidestepped blitzing linebacker Steve DeOssie to throw a 73-yard touchdown pass to tight end Keith Jackson.

"I don't know how the guy missed me—I'm not the fastest of targets these days," McMahon said later. "But once I got past DeOssie, I just waved for Jackson to go deep."

In the second half, McMahon directed touchdown and field-goal drives that each consumed more than nine minutes to put the game away.

"He's a winner," Kotite said.

R.G. Waclawicz

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	8	1	0
N.Y. Jets	5	4	0
Miami	4	5	0
New England	3	6	0
Indianapolis	0	9	0
AFC Central			
Houston	7	2	0
Cleveland	4	5	0
Pittsburgh	3	6	0
Cincinnati	1	8	0
AFC West			
Denver	7	2	0
Kansas City	6	3	0
L.A. Raiders	5	4	0
Seattle	5	4	0
San Diego	1	8	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	9	0	0
Dallas	6	3	0
N.Y. Giants	4	5	0
Philadelphia	4	5	0
Phoenix	4	6	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	7	2	0
Detroit	6	3	0
Minnesota	5	5	0
Green Bay	2	7	0
Tampa Bay	1	8	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	8	1	0
Atlanta	5	4	0
San Francisco	4	5	0
L.A. Rams	3	6	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 22, New England 17
Cincinnati 23, Cleveland 21
Denver 20, Pittsburgh 13
Miami 10, Indianapolis 6

NFC
Atlanta 17, San Francisco 14
Chicago 20, Detroit 10
Dallas 27, Phoenix 7
Minnesota 28, Tampa Bay 13
New Orleans 24, L.A. Rams 17
Philadelphia 30, N.Y. Giants 7

Interconference
N.Y. Jets 19, Green Bay 16 (OT)
Washington 16, Houston 13 (OT)

WEEK TEN

Atlanta stunned San Francisco when Michael Haynes (far left) caught Billy Joe Tolliver's desperate 44-yard pass for a touchdown with one second left. Eight players were in the end zone.

Bill Mount

injured starter Chris Miller (bruised ribs) in the first half, threw the ball into a crowd of eight Falcons and 49ers in the end zone. Atlanta's Michael Haynes caught it for the game-winner with one second left.

"I saw all our guys down in the right corner and just aimed for the middle of the group," Tolliver said.

The 49ers were dealt a double blow. Quarterback Steve Young, the NFC's leading passer and injured Joe Montana's replacement, suffered a sprained knee in the first half and was declared out for three to four weeks. Before leaving, Young threw a club-record 97-yard touchdown pass to Taylor in the second quarter.

And, yes, history does repeat itself. The Falcons beat the 49ers 28-24 in 1983 on a 47-yard "Hail-Mary" pass from Steve Bartkowski to Billy (White Shoes) Johnson.

There was yet another successful "Hail-Mary" pass at the Meadowlands, where the Jets, who call the play "Geronimo," scored on one at the end of the first half.

This time it was Ken O'Brien who threw a 50-yard desperation pass that was tipped by three players and finally caught for a touchdown by Chris Burkett.

New York still had to go into overtime to beat the Packers on Leahy's field goal. Earlier in the season, the 40-year-old Leahy missed a 28-yard field goal in overtime when the Jets lost to the Bears.

"We don't win easily, do we?" Leahy said.

The Jets got some help from the Packers. Earlier in overtime, Chris Jacke, who already had kicked 3 field goals, including one from 53 yards, missed a 42-yard attempt. Then, Vai Sikahema dropped a punt at the Green Bay 23 to set up the winning kick.

Jets linebacker Bobby Houston, who screamed at Sikahema to distract him when he was trying to catch the ball, also recovered the muffed punt.

In Cincinnati, Bernie Kosar of the Browns passed for 285 yards and extended his streak of passes without an interception to 293, one short of Bart Starr's NFL record. But he and the Browns came away frustrated as the Bengals hung on for the victory—their first after eight losses.

"It's almost like we won the Super Bowl," Bengals quarterback Boomer Esiason said. "That's how important and significant this is to us."

Esiason played a big part, shrugging off a slightly separated shoulder on his passing (left) arm to throw 2 touchdown passes, while Harold Green ran for 135 yards.

But it was Thomas who saved the victory by blocking Matt Stover's 34-yard field-goal attempt on the game's last play.

Before Stover's last-second kick, Cleveland's Brian Brennan dropped a potential 24-yard touchdown pass in the end zone with 31 seconds to go.

In Denver, the Steelers, trailing by a touchdown, lost a chance to send their game with the Broncos into overtime when Green dropped Neil O'Donnell's fourth-down, nine-yard pass at the goal line with 41 seconds left.

"He couldn't have thrown me a better pass," Green said. "I'm supposed to make those kinds of catches."

Green may have been distracted by Denver cornerback Charles Dimry, who went for the ball, although he missed it.

Earlier, after falling behind 10-0, the Broncos had scored 20 consecutive points, led by rookie Greg Lewis, who ran for 111 yards and a touchdown. The loss was the Steelers' fourth in a row.

Mary Rubin

QUOTE

Bears head coach Mike Ditka, at home in the wintry conditions in Chicago during his team's 20-10 victory over Detroit:

"It was nice to see dirty uniforms again."

It was exciting in Rich Stadium, too, where the hometown Bills had to go down to the last 15 seconds to hold off New England 22-17 to collect their sixteenth victory in a row at home.

Buffalo linebacker Darryl Talley intercepted a pass at his own 30 with 15 seconds left to seal the victory. Running back Thurman Thomas paced the offense by rushing for 126 yards and a touchdown.

The game was closer than it should have been, however, because Buffalo's Al Edwards, fighting swirling winds that measured 20 to 30 miles per hour, dropped 2 punts. Both were recovered by the Patriots and turned into short touchdown runs by rookie Leonard Russell, who totaled 106 yards.

In Chicago, the Bears won a showdown for first place in the NFC Central Division as they overcame a 10-3 halftime deficit and stopped the Lions 20-10 on Jim Harbaugh's 22- and 8-yard touchdown passes to Wendell Davis. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Cincinnati quarterback **Boomer Esiason**, ignoring a partially separated passing shoulder, threw for 2 touchdowns and led his team to a 23-21 victory over Cleveland, the Bengals' first of the year.

AFC DEFENSE—Jets end **Jeff Lageman** made 6 tackles, including 2 sacks, forced a fumble, and had 4 quarterback pressures as New York edged Green Bay 19-16 in overtime.

Boomer shrugged off his injury.

Michael Heinz

Swilling sacked the Rams.

Paul Jasienski

NFC OFFENSE—Minnesota's **Terry Allen**, who spent the 1990 season on injured reserve, ran for 127 yards and 2 touchdowns to help the Vikings beat Tampa Bay 28-13. Allen scored on 15- and 55-yard runs.

NFC DEFENSE—Saints linebacker **Pat Swilling** sacked Jim Everett 3 times, broke up a pass, and forced a fumble that his team recovered at the New Orleans 15 in the Saints' 24-17 victory over the Rams.

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WEEK 11

NOVEMBER 10

Rypien Has an All-Pro Day, Despite Weather, and Redskins Romp; Nine NFL Quarterbacks Pass for 300 Yards

The weather in Washington was cold, windy, and damp. A light rain fell off and on during the game, sometimes turning to snow. All in all, it was a good day to be indoors.

But Mark Rypien had no intention of coming in from the cold.

The 29-year-old quarterback shrugged off the less-than-perfect conditions to pass for 442 yards and a club-record-equaling 6 touchdowns to lead the unbeaten Redskins to their tenth victory in a a row, a 56-17 rout of Atlanta.

"Ryp is having an all-pro year," said wide receiver Gary Clark, who caught 4 passes for 203 yards and 3 touchdowns. "He's laying it in there every week."

In week 11, a lot of quarterbacks were laying it in there.

Nine quarterbacks, including Rypien, passed for more than 300 yards. Twelve receivers, including Clark, had 100 or more receiving yards.

Houston's Warren Moon almost matched Rypien in yardage, passing for 432 yards in an overtime victory over Dallas, although he didn't throw a touchdown pass.

It was such a wild week that five of the quarterbacks who surpassed 300 yards—Dave Krieg (Seattle), Boomer Esiason (Cincinnati), Ken O'Brien (New York Jets), Jim Everett (Los Angeles Rams), and Mike Tomczak (Green Bay)—lost.

In Washington, the Falcons came to town having won three of their previous four games, but they had to face the explosive Redskins without starting cornerback Deion Sanders, out with a deep thigh bruise.

QUOTE

Colts wide receiver Clarence Verdin, asked how it was when the team lost its first nine games of the season:

"You call your parents collect, and they don't accept the call."

Marv Rubin

As Rypien threw strikes, Clark caught touchdown passes of 61, 19, and 82 yards. Clark's sidekick, Art Monk, had 7 catches for 164 yards, including 19- and 64-yard touchdowns. Tight end Terry Orr grabbed a 9-yard pass from Rypien for yet another touchdown.

Rypien's 6 scoring passes equaled Sammy Baugh's team record (Baugh did it twice, in 1943 and 1947), but Rypien missed Baugh's single-game yardage record by 4 yards. He could have broken the mark, but declined to go back in the game to go for it.

The streaking Redskins also forced 6 turnovers, had 6 sacks, and became the fourteenth NFL team to start a season 10-0.

In Houston, the Oilers played their second consecutive overtime game, but, after losing to Washington the week before, they won this one, sneaking past Dallas 26-23. The Oilers did it with a new kicker.

Al Del Greco, who signed when Ian Howfield was cut after missing a 33-yard field goal in the final seconds that could have beaten the Redskins, made 4 field goals to help beat Dallas. The last was a game-winning 23 yarder with 29 seconds left in overtime.

Del Greco, however, had missed a possible game-winning 41-yard effort with 35 seconds remaining in regulation, bringing back unhappy memories of the previous week.

"I thought the bubble had burst," Del Greco said. "I was just hoping to get another chance."

It didn't look as if he would get that chance when Dallas drove inside the Oilers' 20 in overtime, but linebacker Lamar Lathon forced Emmitt Smith to fumble at the 17, and safety Bubba McDowell recovered at the 15.

Moon didn't pass up this opportunity. He completed 8 passes in a row to lead the Oilers on an 80-yard drive to Del Greco's winning field goal.

Scott Cunningham

Washington's Mark Rypien passed for 442 yards and 6 touchdowns to lead unbeaten Washington to a surprisingly easy 56-17 victory over Atlanta.

The week's most surprising game took place at the Meadowlands, where the winless Indianapolis Colts, who hadn't scored a touchdown in the previous five games, scored four as they rallied from a 14-0 deficit and shocked the Jets 28-27. The Colts had scored a total of 24 points (on eight field goals) in the five losses.

"I couldn't be more thrilled," said Colts head coach Rick Venturi, after getting his first NFL victory in the fifth game since he had replaced Ron Meyer.

Playing without running back Eric Dickerson, who had been suspended by the team, the Colts broke their long touchdown drought in the second

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Colts quarterback **Jeff George** passed for 3 touchdowns to lead Indianapolis to its first victory of the season, 28-27 over the Jets.

AFC DEFENSE—Chiefs linebacker **Derrick Thomas** returned a fumble 23 yards for the winning touchdown as Kansas City beat the Rams 27-20. Thomas also sacked Jim Everett, and forced and recovered his fumble with 40 seconds left.

George led the Colts to victory.

Thomas drove Detroit crazy.

NFC OFFENSE—Redskins quarterback **Mark Rypien** passed for 442 yards and a club-record-equaling 6 touchdowns as Washington routed Atlanta 56-17. Rypien also ran 4 yards for a seventh touchdown.

NFC DEFENSE—Tampa Bay linebacker **Broderick Thomas** had 11 tackles, including 2 sacks and another tackle for a loss, 2 quarterback pressures, and a forced fumble in the Buccaneers' 30-21 victory over Detroit.

Bob Rosato

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

HIT OR MISS, KELLY'S ON TARGET

Bruce Dierdorff

Jim Kelly is one tough quarterback.

The Buffalo Bills were on a third-quarter touchdown drive that would extend their lead to 21-10 over Green Bay when Kelly took a shot in the back and came out with bruised ribs.

While he was gone, Green Bay's Mike Tomczak threw a 58-yard touchdown pass to Sterling Sharpe, and the Bills' lead was sliced to 21-17. A victory for favored Buffalo was very much in doubt.

Kelly, who returned to the sideline after being examined in the locker room, still was sore, but you couldn't have kept him off the field with a barbed wire fence.

The 31-year-old quarterback immediately led the Bills on a field-goal drive, then led them to 10 more points, including a touchdown he scored himself on a 1-yard option run, and Buffalo won 34-24.

"When I first got back in, there was some pain," Kelly said later. "But this is football and sometimes you have to suck it up a little bit, go out there and play with some pain. That's the name of the game."

Kelly ignored the pain.

For Kelly, that has always been the name of the game. In 1990, when he led the NFL in passing efficiency, he suffered partial ligament and cartilage tears in his left knee in the season's fourteenth game. He missed the last two weeks, but returned for the playoffs and led the Bills to Super Bowl XXV.

In 1991, he started the season opener against Miami with a sprained ankle that left him limping all afternoon. Then he jammed it twice and had to leave the game the second time.

But he returned to rally the Bills to a 35-31 victory, passing for 381 yards and 2 touchdowns.

"This is my body and I can take a lot more," Kelly said defiantly after the game.

In the seventh game against the Colts, Kelly suffered a concussion that finally forced him to the sideline for good, but he started the next week.

Despite his bumps and bruises, Kelly had led the Bills to a 9-1 record through 10 games, and again was first in the NFL in passing efficiency (104.5). He also led the league with 22 touchdown passes.

"If there is a tougher quarterback in the league, I don't know who he is," Bills head coach Marv Levy said.

quarter when Jeff George threw a 49-yard touchdown pass to Jessie Hester.

Despite rainy, windy weather, the 23-year-old quarterback passed for two more touchdowns, a 7-yard combination with Hester and the 7-yard game-winning effort to Bill Brooks in the third quarter. Clarence Verdin also scored on an 88-yard kickoff return.

In Cleveland, the Browns jumped to a 23-0 lead on the Eagles and led 30-17 at halftime as Bernie Kosar passed for 3 touchdowns and set an NFL record for most consecutive passes without an interception.

Kosar's streak reached 308 attempts, before cornerback Ben Smith's second-quarter interception snapped it. Hall of Fame member Bart Starr of Green Bay held the old record with 294 successive passes.

But Kosar wasn't celebrating.

Tough, old Jim McMahon who had his swollen elbow drained before the game (he had suffered an adverse reaction to a shot for tendinitis) passed for 341 yards and 3 touchdowns and rallied the Eagles to a thrilling 32-30 victory.

"Early this morning, I told my wife I didn't think I was going to play today," McMahon said. "My arm swelled up on me last night and this morning, and it was killing me."

Blowing a 23-0 lead gave the Browns a big pain, too. It was the worst collapse in team history.

McMahon won the game with his 5-yard pass to Calvin Williams for the final touchdown with 5:19 remaining, after linebacker Britt Hager recovered Webster Slaughter's fumbled punt on the 2 to set it up.

It was difficult to kick field goals in Denver, where 2 of them—1 by each team—were blocked in the final two minutes. The Raiders edged the Broncos 17-16 when reserve offensive tackle James FitzPatrick blocked David Treadwell's 48-yard kick as time expired.

Michael Heinz

Steelers tight end Eric Green (86) caught a touchdown pass to beat Cincinnati in overtime.

Los Angeles had failed to take a 20-16 lead when Denver linebacker Karl Mecklenburg blocked Jeff Jaeger's 37-yard attempt with 1:55 left.

The difference in the game was still another blocked kick—a conversion attempt swatted down by Raiders defensive tackle Scott Davis after Denver's final touchdown with 8:37 remaining.

In Cincinnati, the Steelers snapped their four-game losing streak and lowered the Bengals' record to 1-9 with a 33-27 comeback victory in overtime.

Pittsburgh's Neil O'Donnell passed for 309 yards and 3 touchdowns, including a 26-yard game-winner to tight end Eric Green 6:32 into overtime. Linebacker Greg Lloyd stripped the ball from Cincinnati's Ickey Woods and returned it 19 yards to set up the winning touchdown.

In Minneapolis, the Bears took a two-game lead in the NFC Central Division when they hammered the Vikings 34-17, while Detroit was surprised by Tampa Bay 30-21.

As the Bears won their fourth game in a row, Neal Anderson rushed for 91 yards and scored on 6- and 24-yard runs, while cornerback Lemuel Stinson returned an interception 34 yards for a touchdown.

In Tampa, Reggie Cobb ran for 139 yards and a team-record 3 touchdowns, including a 59-yard run, to spur the Buccaneers. Detroit's Barry Sanders rushed for 118 yards and 2 scores. ■

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	9	1	0
Miami	5	5	0
N.Y. Jets	5	5	0
New England	3	7	0
Indianapolis	1	9	0
AFC Central			
Houston	8	2	0
Cleveland	4	6	0
Pittsburgh	4	6	0
Cincinnati	1	9	0
AFC West			
Denver	7	3	0
Kansas City	7	3	0
L.A. Raiders	6	4	0
Seattle	5	5	0
San Diego	2	8	0

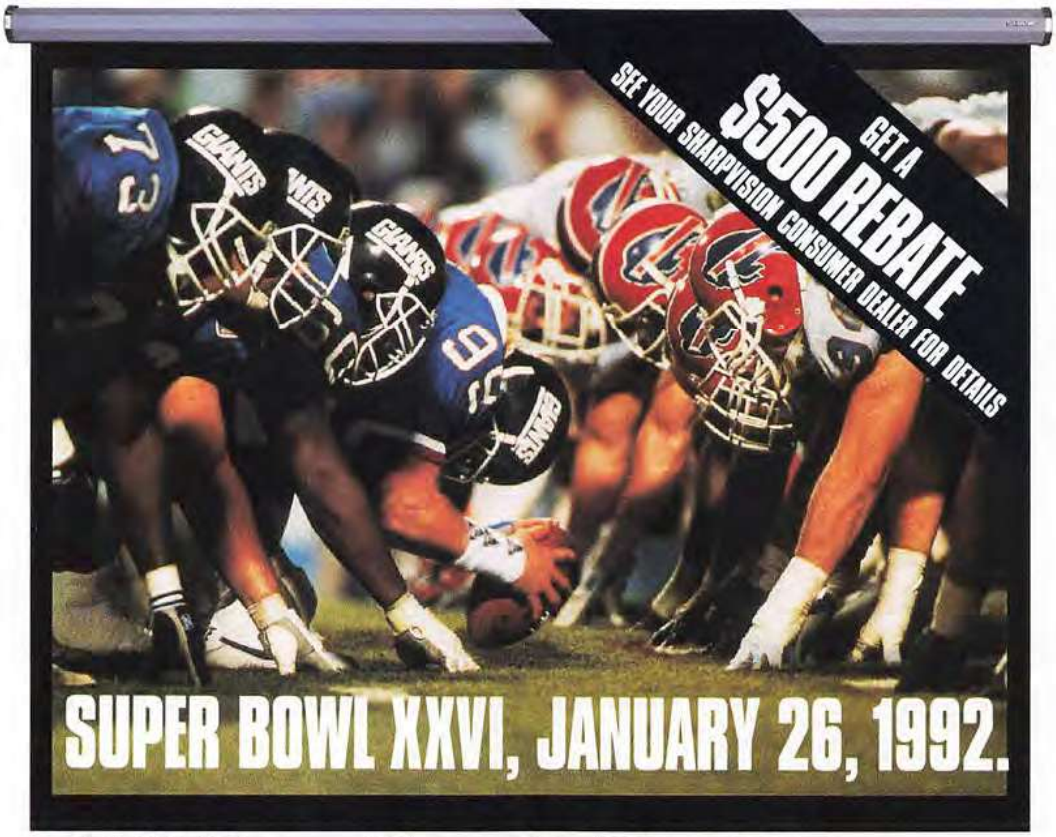
NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	10	0	0
Dallas	6	4	0
N.Y. Giants	5	5	0
Philadelphia	5	5	0
Phoenix	4	7	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	8	2	0
Detroit	6	4	0
Minnesota	5	6	0
Green Bay	2	8	0
Tampa Bay	2	8	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	1	0
Atlanta	5	5	0
San Francisco	4	6	0
L.A. Rams	3	7	0

Scores

AFC
Indianapolis 28, N.Y. Jets 27
L.A. Raiders 17, Denver 16
Miami 30, New England 20
Pittsburgh 33, Cincinnati 27 (OT)
San Diego 17, Seattle 14

NFC
Chicago 34, Minnesota 17
New Orleans 10, San Francisco 3
N.Y. Giants 21, Phoenix 14
Tampa Bay 30, Detroit 21
Washington 56, Atlanta 17

Interconference
Buffalo 34, Green Bay 24
Houston 26, Dallas 23 (OT)
Kansas City 27, L.A. Rams 20
Philadelphia 32, Cleveland 30



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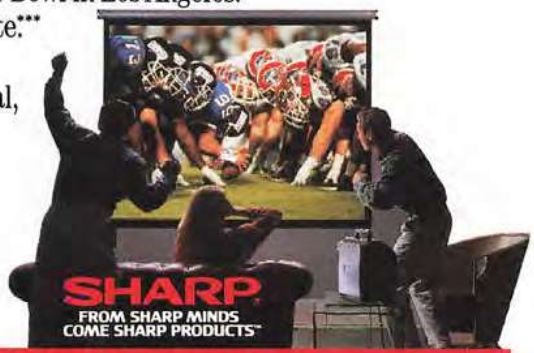

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NFL BABY

WEEK 12

NOVEMBER 17

Moon Drives Oilers to Ninth Victory as Five Teams Win in Final 20 Seconds; Chargers Shock Saints

Monday, November 11 was Warren Moon's thirty-fifth birthday, but he celebrated it Sunday night.

With Houston trailing Cleveland 24-21 and time running out, Moon drove the Oilers 84 yards in two minutes to pull out a thrilling 28-24 victory on a 1-yard touchdown pass to Drew Hill with nine seconds left.

The victory clinched at least a share of the AFC Central title for the Oilers, who were off to a 9-2 start for the first time in their history.

"We got together on the sideline and said to ourselves that we weren't going to be denied," Moon said later. "I was going to Drew [on the drive] because he's so reliable and easy to read. He makes my job easy."

The job was anything but easy for a lot of NFL teams in week 12. Including the Houston-Cleveland battle, five games were decided in the final 20 seconds.

In other last-minute decisions, Denver held off Kansas City 24-20, the Chargers rallied to shock New Orleans 24-21, the Jets beat New England 28-21, and the 49ers defeated Phoenix 14-10.

The Houston-Cleveland game was Moon's second brilliant performance in a row. Seven days after passing for 432 yards in an overtime victory over Dallas, the Oilers' quarterback threw for 399 yards and 3 touchdowns against Cleveland.

On the winning touchdown drive against the Browns, Moon completed 8 of 11 passes, 5 of them to Hill. Earlier, Hill caught a 40-yard pass for a touchdown; he had 11 receptions for 144 yards during his very productive day.

The Browns, who took their 24-21 lead on Bernie Kosar's 40-yard touchdown pass to Reggie Langhorne with 3:17 left, were searching for a rabbit's foot. It was their third successive loss—by a total of eight points.

In Kansas City, the Chiefs were frustrated, too. They rolled up 7 more first downs and 158 more yards than Denver, but lost to the Broncos for the eleventh time in the last 14 games. Kansas City's Steve DeBerg threw 4 interceptions.

This game had a frantic finish, too, as Kansas City, behind backup quarterback Mark Vlasic,

Long Photography

Scott Davis (left) and Anthony Smith each had 2½ sacks as the Raiders overwhelmed Dave Krieg and the rest of the Seahawks 31-7 in Los Angeles.

DOWN AND UP IN NEW YORK CITY

Four weeks into the season, the New York Jets had just lost heartbreaking back-to-back games to Buffalo and Chicago—the latter in overtime. Their record was 1-3, and some observers wondered if the team might fall apart.

Second-year head coach Bruce Coslet said no.

"I'm damn proud of this football team," Coselt said at the time. "We have a bunch of players who have gone out two weeks in a row and busted their guts. They haven't left an ounce of energy on the field.

"We're still a young team and not quite there yet, but it will come. Win or lose, you have to forget about last week. That's our credo around here."

Seven weeks later, Coslet had done a masterful job of helping his team forget its disappointments.

With a last-second 28-21 victory over New England in week 12, the Jets had won five of their last seven games, improved their record to 6-5, and were in the chase for an AFC wild-card berth.

It had not been an easy ride. Three of the Jets' six victories were by 3 points. The margin of defeat in their five losses averaged 4 points.

And, in their latest drama, they beat New England when defensive end Jeff Lageman and linebacker Kyle Clifton tackled running back Jon Vaughn—who already had scored 2 touchdowns—on the New York 1 as time ran out. The Jets had blown a 21-0 fourth-quarter lead.

Chris Schwenk

Coslet was proud of his team.

"It was an unbelievable game," Clifton said. "I've been in the league eight years and I thought I'd seen everything. But this game was something different."

While New York's Ken O'Brien passed for 309 yards and 3 touchdowns, New England's Hugh Millen struck for 372 yards and a touchdown himself. The deciding touchdown was O'Brien's 3-yard toss to reserve lineman Trevor Matich (lined up at tight end) with 57 seconds left.

Coslet refused to be disappointed by the fact that an easy victory turned into a desperate one.

"We'll just take the win," he said.

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	10	1	0
N.Y. Jets	6	5	0
Miami	5	6	0
New England	3	8	0
Indianapolis	1	10	0
AFC Central			
Houston	9	2	0
Cleveland	4	7	0
Pittsburgh	4	7	0
Cincinnati	1	10	0
AFC West			
Denver	8	3	0
Kansas City	7	4	0
L.A. Raiders	7	4	0
Seattle	5	6	0
San Diego	3	8	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	11	0	0
Dallas	6	5	0
N.Y. Giants	6	5	0
Philadelphia	6	5	0
Phoenix	4	8	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	9	2	0
Detroit	7	4	0
Minnesota	6	5	0
Green Bay	2	9	0
Tampa Bay	2	9	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	2	0
Atlanta	6	5	0
San Francisco	5	6	0
L.A. Rams	3	8	0

Scores

AFC

Buffalo 41, Miami 27
Denver 24, Kansas City 20
Houston 28, Cleveland 24
L.A. Raiders 31, Seattle 7
N.Y. Jets 28, New England 21

NFC

Atlanta 43, Tampa Bay 7
Detroit 21, L.A. Rams 10
Minnesota 35, Green Bay 21
N.Y. Giants 22, Dallas 9
San Francisco 14, Phoenix 10

Interconference

Chicago 31, Indianapolis 17
Philadelphia 17, Cincinnati 10
San Diego 24, New Orleans 21
Washington 41, Pittsburgh 14

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

Peter Brouillet

Billy Ray had a ball.

AFC OFFENSE—Houston quarterback **Warren Moon** passed for 399 yards and 3 touchdowns, including a 1-yard, game-winning toss to Drew Hill with nine seconds left to beat Cleveland 28-24.

AFC DEFENSE—San Diego linebacker **Billy Ray Smith** made 3 tackles, intercepted a pass, broke up 2 more passes, and forced and recovered a fumble in a 24-21 upset of the Saints.

NFC OFFENSE—Washington wide receiver **Art Monk** caught 8 passes for 130 yards to help unbeaten Washington rout Pittsburgh 41-14. He caught a 63-yard pass to set up the game's first touchdown, and an 11-yard pass to score his team's second touchdown.

NFC DEFENSE—Atlanta cornerback **Deion Sanders** intercepted 2 passes, returning 1 of them 31 yards to set up a touchdown, broke up another pass, and made 5 tackles as the Falcons blitzed Tampa Bay 43-7.

Scott Cunningham

Monk caught 8 passes.

reached the Denver 31 on the last play. But the Chiefs lost a chance to run at least one more play when 20 seconds, instead of the mandatory 10, were mistakenly taken off the clock after a last-minute Chiefs' injury time out.

The victory left the Broncos (8-3) in sole possession of first place in the AFC West, a game ahead of the Chiefs and Raiders (both 7-4).

"We knew we'd have to find a way to win—it didn't matter if it was pretty or not," said Elway, who was sacked 6 times, including 3 by linebacker Derrick Thomas.

If the victory wasn't a work of beauty, Gaston Green's running was. The Broncos' back dashed for 133 yards, including a 60-yard touchdown run.

The Raiders stayed on Denver's heels with a surprisingly easy 31-7 victory over Seattle. Jay Schroeder completed 16 of 19 passes for 3 touchdowns, including a short screen pass that former running back (and now tight end) Ethan Horton carried 51 yards for a score.

The Los Angeles defense had 7 sacks, including 2½ each by tackle Scott Davis and backup end Anthony Smith.

Bob Rosato

Linebacker Cornelius Bennett returned a fumble for a score to help Buffalo beat Miami.

In San Diego, the 2-8 Chargers met the 9-1 Saints, and, surprise!—the Chargers won. John Carney, who beat Seattle with a team-record 54-yard field goal with 18 seconds to go the week before, knocked off the Saints with a 19-yard field goal with five seconds left.

"This is a great win for the team and the organization," Carney said. "A lot of people didn't think we had a prayer against these guys."

John Friesz drove the Chargers 63 yards to tie the score at 21-21 on Marion Butts's 5-yard touchdown run with 3:04 left. Then he marched them 70 yards to set up the winning field goal.

In Pittsburgh, the unbeaten Redskins became the first team to clinch a playoff berth, taking a 27-0 lead after three quarters and cruising past the Steelers 41-14. The Redskins were the first team since the 1985 Bears to start the season 11-0.

Mark Rypien, who threw 6 touchdown passes against Atlanta the week before, passed for 325 yards and 2 scores this time.

"Ryp is hot," Washington head coach Joe Gibbs said. "He has a lot of confidence, and the line is giving him good protection."

How good was that protection? The Redskins hadn't given up a sack in their last six games. On the other hand, Washington's defense sacked Pittsburgh's Neil O'Donnell 5 times as the Steelers skidded to their fifth loss in six games.

Ends Reggie White and Clyde Simmons each had 2 of Philadelphia's 6 sacks as the Eagles won their third in a row, beating the Bengals 17-10. White also had an interception to set up a field goal, while safety Wes Hopkins had 2 more interceptions.

Buffalo and Chicago stayed hot, winning their fifth games in a row. The Bills blasted Miami 41-27 on Monday night, while the Bears swatted the Colts 31-17.

In Miami, Buffalo linebacker Cornelius Bennett returned a fumble 6 yards for the defensive touchdown that put the Bills ahead for good, 17-10.

Meanwhile, Jim Kelly passed for 3 touchdowns, including 5- and 23-yard collaborations with Andre Reed, while Thurman Thomas and Kenneth Davis ran for 135 and 98 yards, respectively. Thomas scored twice, once on a 10-yard pass from Kelly.

In Indianapolis, the Bears played without injured running back Neal Anderson, but Brad Muster ran for 101 yards and a touchdown and caught 6 passes for 44 yards and another score.

In Green Bay, the Vikings trailed the Packers 21-14 at intermission, but won the second half 21-0 and the game 35-21. Rich Gannon threw 3 touchdown passes and ran 5 yards for a fourth score. Cris Carter caught 29- and 17-yard scoring passes, one in each half.

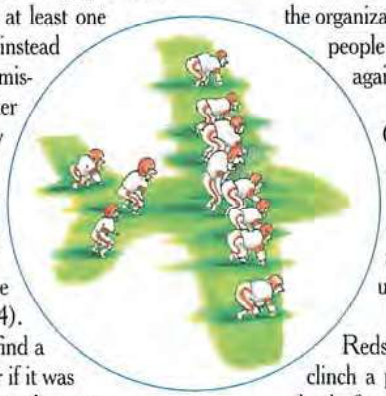
In Atlanta, the Falcons scored a club-record 33 points in the second quarter to rout Tampa Bay 43-7. Chris Miller threw 39-, 12-, and 15-yard touchdown passes to Andre Rison.

Detroit continued to chase a playoff berth as Erik Kramer threw 3 touchdown passes, including 2 to Robert Clark. The Lions sent the Rams down to their fifth straight loss, 21-10.

But the team spent the week after the game shrouded in gloom. Starting guard Mike Utley was injured while blocking as Kramer threw his second touchdown pass, and doctors said he would be permanently paralyzed from the chest down.

Teammates said Utley gave the thumbs up sign as he was carried off the field and urged his teammates to win the game.

"It's hard to fathom that kind of courage," Detroit linebacker Chris Spielman said. ■

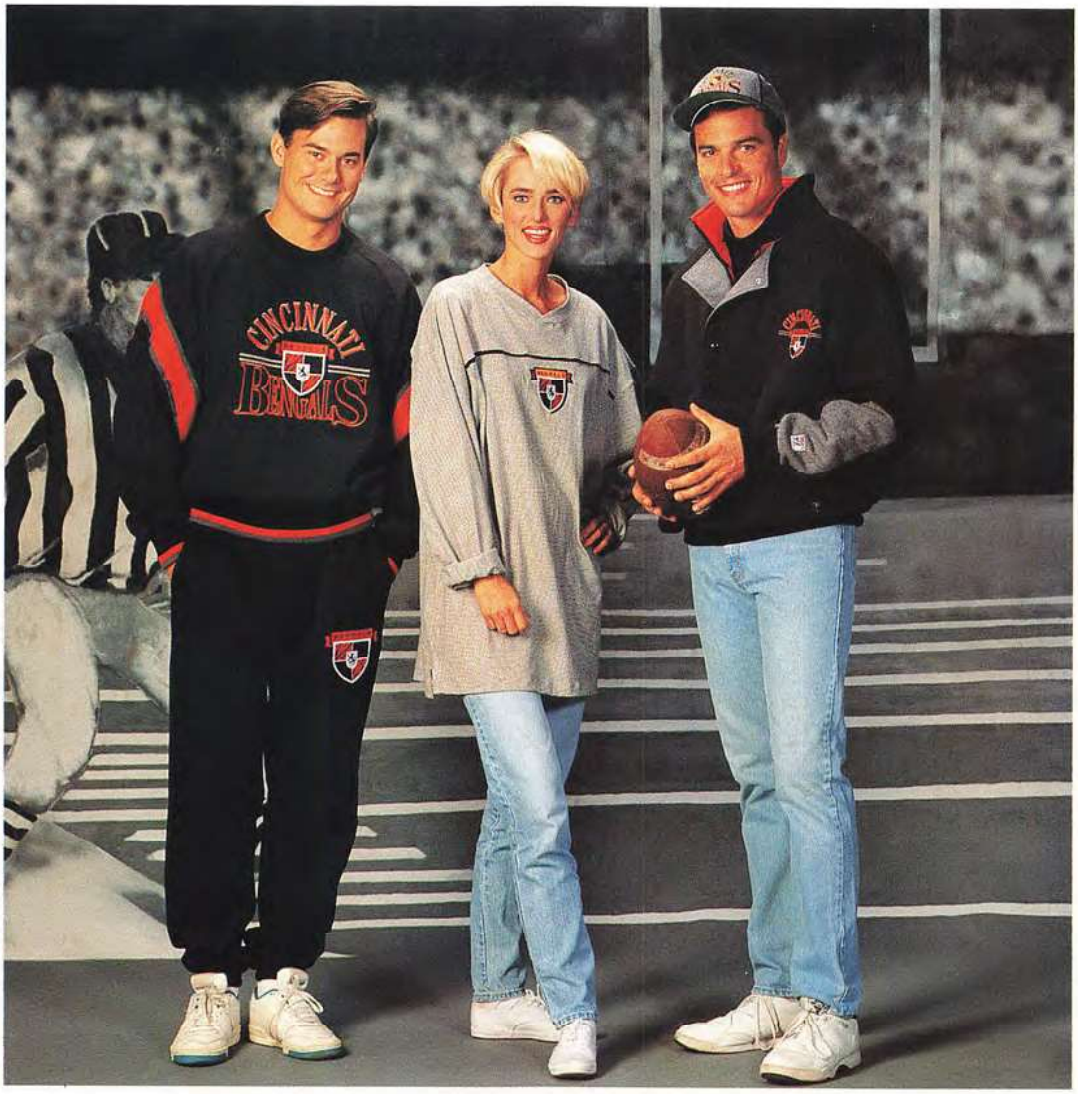


QUOTE

Browns tackle Paul Farren, complaining about the difficulty of hearing signals in the Astrodome:

"It's like trying to talk to someone next to a jet engine."

Mary Rubin



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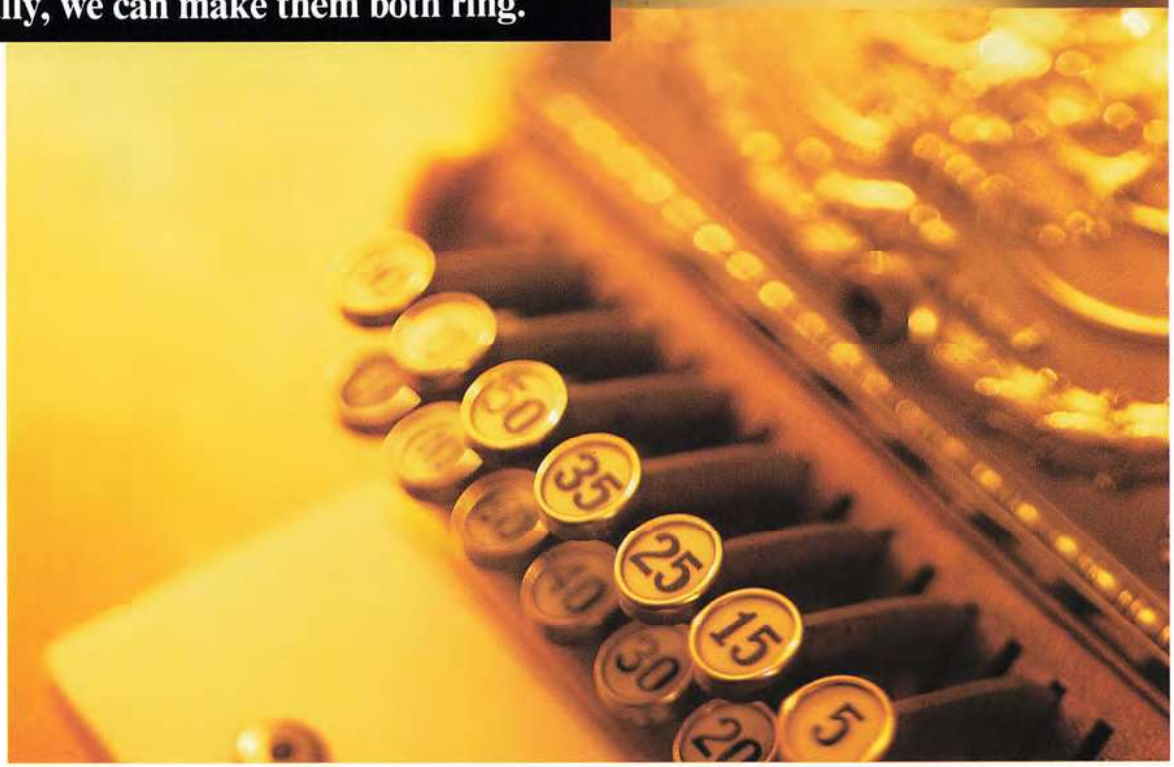


GTE

THE POWER IS ON

WEEK 13

NOVEMBER 24

'On Any Given Sunday...' Finally Arrives for Six Division Leaders; Cowboys Hand Redskins First Loss

There's an old cliche about NFL football that goes something like this: "On any given Sunday, any team can beat any other team."

November 24 was that given Sunday.

Remarkably, all six division leaders lost—and five of those losses could be classified as major suprises. One after another, 11-0 Washington, 10-1 Buffalo, and 9-2 Chicago, New Orleans, and Houston went down like bowling pins. Only Denver's loss in Seattle was not a shock.

James D. Smith

Alvin Harper's 34-yard touchdown catch in the last seconds of the first half helped Dallas beat Washington.

It was such an amazing day that all three NFC leaders lost at home. And Washington, Buffalo, Houston, and New Orleans missed opportunities to clinch division titles.

No surprise was greater than the one in Washington, where the unbeaten Redskins had outscored six previous opponents 216-47 this season. But Washington was upended by the Cowboys 24-21, even though Dallas lost quarterback Troy Aikman with a knee injury early in the second half.

"I'm upset that we lost," Washington head coach Joe Gibbs said. "But it has happened. Now we've got to take it and learn from it."

One thing Gibbs already knew is that Dallas usually plays well in Washington. The Cowboys have a 10-7 record in the nation's capital since 1974.

In winning, Dallas not only overcame the loss of Aikman, but also a ferocious pass rush by the Redskins, who totaled 7 sacks against Aikman and backup quarterback Steve Beuerlein. However, when Aikman limped off the field with a partially torn knee ligament in the third quarter, he had Dallas ahead 14-7.

Beuerlein was on target, too. First, he directed an 81-yard touchdown drive that gave the Cowboys a 21-7 lead. Dallas scored on a 23-yard pass from Beuerlein to Michael Irvin. Then, after Washington sliced the lead to 21-14, Beuerlein led a seven-minute drive to Ken Willis's clinching 42-yard field goal with 1:14 remaining.

The Cowboys' victory was not a fluke. Dallas had 137 more yards, 9 more first downs, and 25 more plays. Emmitt Smith rushed for 132 yards and scored on a 32-yard run.

"I'm extremely proud of these guys," Dallas head coach Jimmy Johnson said. "They're probably the only ones who felt they had a shot at winning today."

The downside for Dallas was that doctors said

HEEEEEEEEEERRRRRRRRRE'S PHIL!

Giants quarterback Jeff Hostetler was strapped to a stretcher in the third quarter and wheeled off the field at Tampa Bay. In came Phil Simms.

Yes, that Phil Simms, the leading passer in Giants history.

"I had very mixed emotions when I came in," Simms said later. "I don't ever want to come in when someone's hurt."

Simms had lost his starting position to Hostetler in training camp because of an injured foot and a decision by new head coach Ray Handley.

The most valuable player in Super Bowl XXI, Simms had led the Giants to an 11-2 record in 1990, when he went out with a severely sprained foot against Buffalo in the fourteenth game.

Jim Turner

The happy Giants mobbed Simms (11).

Hostetler replaced him in that game (a narrow New York loss), then went on to lead the Giants to five successive wins, including a dramatic rematch with the Bills in Super Bowl XXV. Handley awarded Hostetler the job before the 1991 season.

It had to hurt the 36-year-old Simms—he had the highest pass efficiency rating of his career in 1990—but he never complained. Now, he was back in the lineup.

Hostetler would go on to the hospital with three small broken bones in his lower back. Simms would go on to lead the Giants to victory.

When he first came in, Simms finished off a touchdown drive started by Hostetler for a 14-7 lead, but Tampa Bay tied the score 14-14.

Then, with 1:41 left in the game, the Giants got the ball on their own 10—and Simms drove his team 90 yards, completing 7 of 7 passes on the dramatic touchdown march.

With 16 seconds left, he threw a perfect 30-yard pass to Stephen Baker in the left corner of the end zone to win the game.

With Hostetler out of action perhaps the rest of the season, the Giants were once again Phil Simms's team.

"You just know when Phil is in there, anything can happen," linebacker Lawrence Taylor said. "And most times it's good."

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	10	2	0
N.Y. Jets	7	5	0
Miami	6	6	0
New England	4	8	0
Indianapolis	1	11	0
AFC Central			
Houston	9	3	0
Cleveland	5	7	0
Pittsburgh	5	7	0
Cincinnati	1	11	0
AFC West			
Denver	8	4	0
L.A. Raiders	8	4	0
Kansas City	7	5	0
Seattle	6	6	0
San Diego	3	9	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	11	1	0
Dallas	7	5	0
N.Y. Giants	7	5	0
Philadelphia	7	5	0
Phoenix	4	9	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	9	3	0
Detroit	8	4	0
Minnesota	6	7	0
Green Bay	3	9	0
Tampa Bay	2	10	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	3	0
Atlanta	7	5	0
San Francisco	6	6	0
L.A. Rams	3	9	0

Scores

AFC

Cleveland 20, Kansas City 15
L.A. Raiders 38, Cincinnati 14
New England 16, Buffalo 13
N.Y. Jets 24, San Diego 3
Pittsburgh 26, Houston 14
Seattle 13, Denver 10

NFC

Atlanta 23, New Orleans 20 (OT)
Dallas 24, Washington 21
Detroit 34, Minnesota 14
N.Y. Giants 21, Tampa Bay 14
Philadelphia 34, Phoenix 14
San Francisco 33, L.A. Rams 10

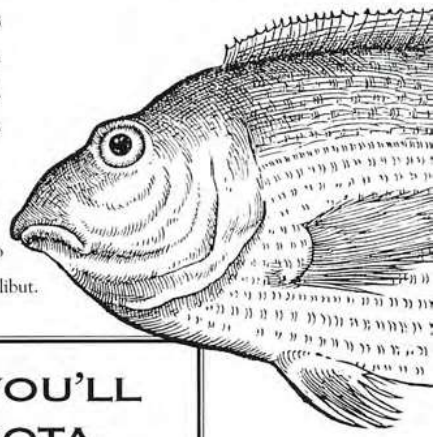
Interconference

Green Bay 14, Indianapolis 10
Miami 16, Chicago 13 (OT)

Although these waddlers aren't native inhabitants, rumor has it that they've been spotted in Northern parts of the state and at a few formal gatherings.

These righteous official Super Bowl jackets are yours for the wearing. Apex One's 100% crinkle nylon shell has stylish graphics on back and diamond quilted polyfill lining. Imported. Sizes: m-xl. #0268 $139.95
Chalkline's has a nylon shell and Dacron 808 quilt lining. Sizes: m-xl. #0269 $84.95

Be the coolest person at the party by wearing this T-shirt from Starter with the official Super Bowl theme art. Sizes: m-xl. #0265 $18.95



Chilled and grilled, this guy made his way into our ad just for the halibut.

SOME OF THE COOLER THINGS YOU'LL SEE THIS JANUARY IN MINNESOTA.

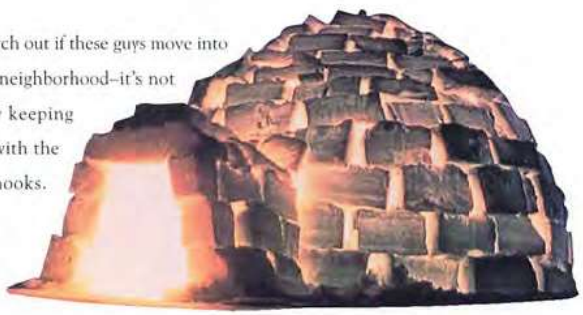
If you're under 15, try not to get pelted with this ball of chilliness. If you're older make sure you don't throw your arm out whipping one.

Here's a concept that might be over your head. A very cool all wool two-tone Super Bowl cap. Adjustable size. Imported. #0266 $19.95

For you hipsters that toss the pigskin around, we have an official Wilson Super Bowl game ball. #4077 $99.95 And wearing this Sports Specialties white cotton Super Bowl cap has been known to improve passing accuracy. Imported. Adj sz. #0267 $16.95

You won't know who's who, or what's what unless you get this year's official program. #4075 $10.00
But what good's all that without this way cool Commemorative cologne? #4076 $45.00/4 oz bottle.

Watch out if these guys move into the neighborhood–it's not easy keeping up with the Nanooks.



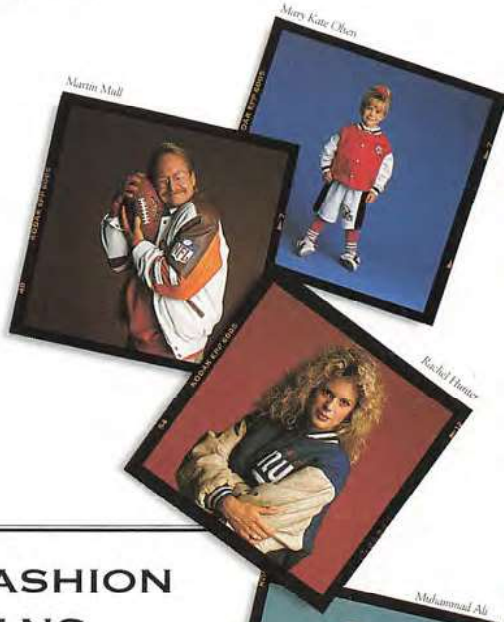
SUPER XXVI BOWL

ORDER TOLL-FREE
1 800 NFL-SHOP

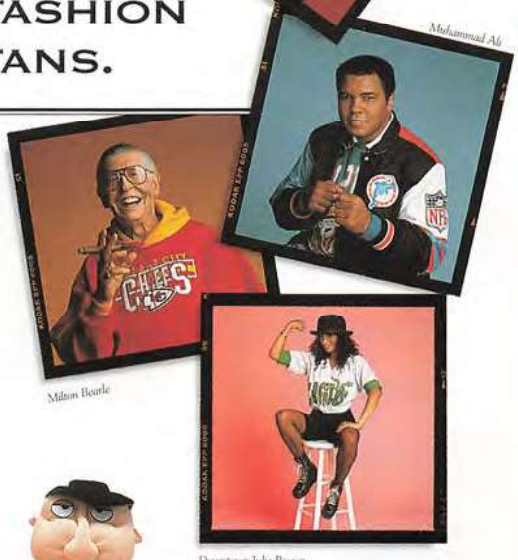
Feel like a football hero in the DeLong NFL Award Leather and Wool Jacket. In addition to the chenille logo of your favorite team on the chest and back is an "Award" patch commemorating the team's most recent Conference or Super Bowl victory. Sizes 36-50. (Order one or two sizes larger than your normal size). #3061 $289.95

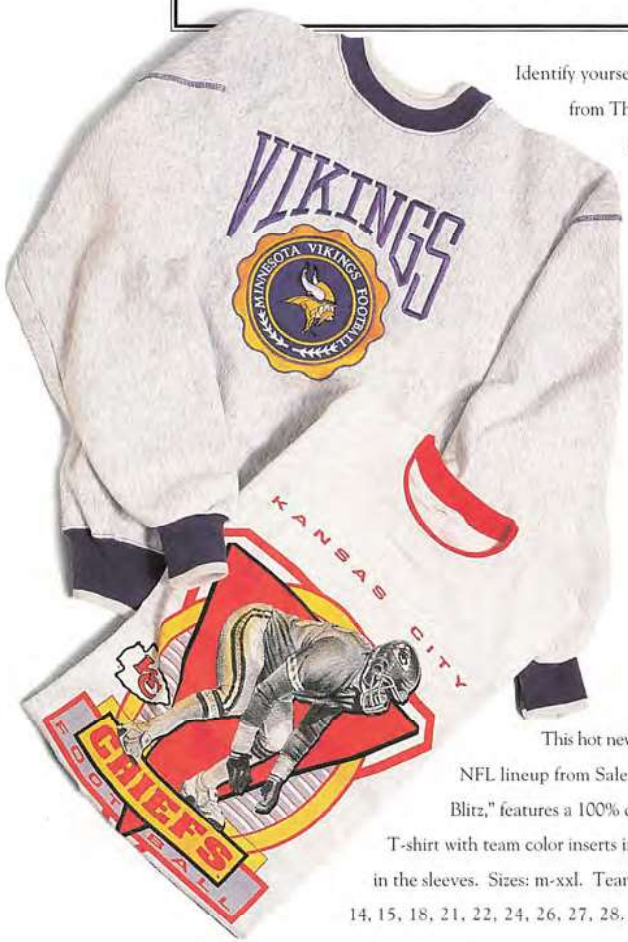
Stay warm in this eye-catching Turtleneck Fleece from Signal. Made from extremely comfortable 75% cotton / 25% polyester fleece with sewn-on embroidered team patch. Sizes: m-xl. Teams: 1, 2, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 18, 21, 22, 25, 26. #1961 $57.95

This 100% cotton twill Zubaz cap from AJD is the great new choice of the NFL pros. Adjustable. All teams. #0765 $14.95



SOME OF THE HOTTEST FASHION YOU'LL SEE ON OUR FANS.





Identify yourself as a winner with this crew neck from The Game with appliqued seal design and team name. 50% cotton/ 50% poly fleece. Color tipped knit on collar, cuffs and waistband. Sizes: m-xxl. Teams: 1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 26, 28. #2262 $64.95 (Add $5.00 for xxl).

This hot new addition to the NFL lineup from Salem Screen "The Blitz," features a 100% cotton, ash-grey T-shirt with team color inserts in the collar and in the sleeves. Sizes: m-xxl. Teams 1, 2, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28. #3464 $19.95

Steamed over fumbles, penalties, or replays? Take it out on a New Tear Apart NFL Stress Doll. Then Velcro it back together and give it to the kids. Imported. Teams: 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29 (referee) #2661 $24.95

Team NFL

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1 800 NFL-SHOP

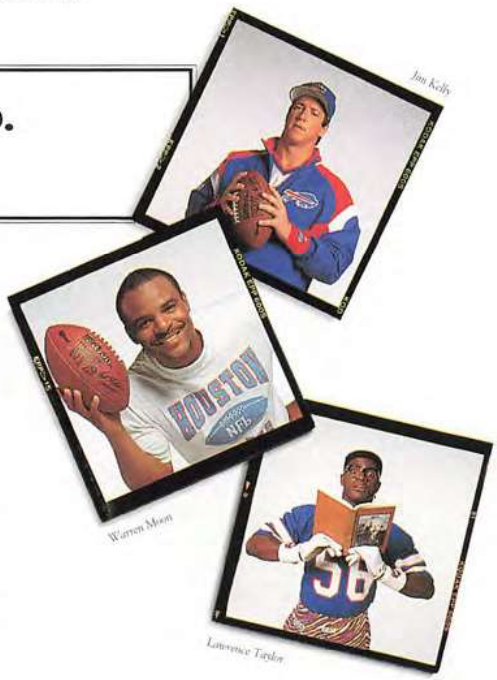
These are the same socks coaches wear during practice and game time. Made by Pine Hosiery they are NFL tested and tough. Team helmet logo on both socks. All teams. One size: 10-13. #0865 $8.95

The Starter satin coaches jacket is a favorite on the sidelines. Warm quilted nylon for windy, winter days. All jackets in team colors; 49ers and Giants available in black also. Sizes: s-xxl. (Small–limited availability) #1161 $99.95/ Black jacket #1165 $99.95/ Size xxl $119.95/ 49ers gold jacket #1161 $124.95 / 49ers xxl gold jacket $144.95

RCHANDISE YOU'LL SEE ON THE FIELD.
ION THE SIDE LINES.

New Bike compression shorts with Zubaz stripes have become the choice of pros because they provide uniform protection to key muscle groups. Teams: 1, 2, 8, 12, 15, 18, 21, 22, 26. Sizes: s-xl. #0262 $29.95

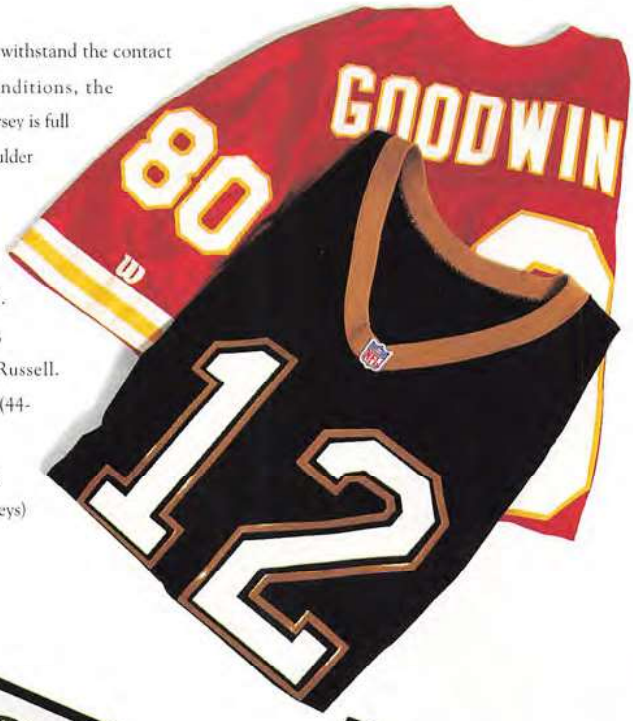
The first and still one of the most popular sweaters Cliff Engle makes. This full chest crew neck sweater–seen on the sidelines in many Super Bowls–has knit ribbing at waist, cuffs, and neckline and features your team colors and team name boldly styled across the chest. 75% orlon/25% wool. All teams. Sizes: s-xxl. (s–limited availability) #1163 $49.95



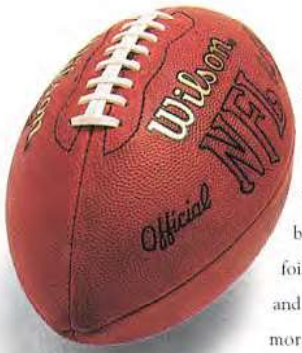
Get up close and personal with your favorite NFL stars. NFL Pro Line Portraits Signet Series–the premiere edition of these unique trading cards. The cards are randomly inserted in display boxes which contain 36 packs of 12 cards each. #1761 $42.95/box

AUTHENTIC PRO LINE

Tough enough to withstand the contact of NFL game conditions, the authentic game jersey is full cut to fit over shoulder pads. Each has team graphics and stripes as seen on the field. Made by Wilson, Champion, and Russell. Sizes: m(40-42), l(44-46), xl(48-50)
#0461 (Dark jerseys)
#0462 (White jerseys)
$89.95



These Sports Specialties Pro Line™ wool caps are rugged, long-lasting favorites of players and coaches alike. Imported. One size fits all.
#1062 $17.95



Since 1941, every game in the NFL has been played with a Wilson football. This 50th anniversary game ball with "Wilson" in gold foil will be used for the first and only time this season. No more will be produced after Super Bowl XXVI. #0365 $79.95

Art Shell

Sam Wyche

George Seifert

SOME OF THE TOUGHEST ME
NOT TO MENT

Neumann receiver gloves are the only patented glove endorsed by the NFL with a skin-thin fit for great gripping power and sure grasp. Colors: white, black, red, blue. Sizes: s-xxl. #1566 $39.95

Russell Athletic T-shirts are an easy #1 draft pick for "America's best". Made of the highest quality 100% combed cotton with full athletic cut. NFL team graphics. Sizes: m-xl. Color: white. All teams. #0963 $16.95

A real heavyweight on the sidelines, Champion Reverse Weave crew neck sweatshirt are all grey, imprinted with graphics that follow each teams's practice field style. Purposely oversized to accommodate shrinkage. Sizes: m (42), l (46), xl (48), xxl (50). All teams. #0761 $47.95
Reverse Weave pants. Sizes: s-xl. #0762 $52.95

Great for workouts, going to the game, or just relaxing. New Zubaz tone-on-tone black pants come with a team logo on the left thigh. Sizes: s-xl. Teams: 1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28. #3461 $34.95

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3.	Bills	9.	Chiefs	15.	Giants	21.	Raiders	27. Vikings
4.	Broncos	10.	Colts	16.	Jets	22.	Rams	28. 49ers
5.	Browns	11.	Cowboys	17.	Lions	23.	Redskins	
6.	Buccaneers	12.	Dolphins	18.	Oilers	24.	Saints	

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AFC Teams

Bengals	1	Chiefs	6	Patriots	11		
Bills	2	Colts	7	Raiders	12		
Broncos	3	Dolphins	8	Seahawks	13		
Browns	4	Jets	9	Steelers	14		
Chargers	5	Oilers	10				

NFC Teams

Bears	15	Falcons	20	Rams	25		
Buccaneers	16	49er's	21	Redskins	26		
Cardinals	17	Giants	22	Saints	27		
Cowboys	18	Lions	23	Vikings	28		
Eagles	19	Packers	24	NFL	29		

Aikman could be sidelined for the rest of the regular season.

Buffalo knew it would be tough at New England because the Bills had won by only 5 points in their first meeting at Buffalo.

The Patriots, who had lost their previous four games in the final minute, took the lead early in the fourth quarter, and held on to win 16-13. The loss snapped the Bills' five-game winning streak.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Pete Stoyanovich's 27-yard field goal in overtime decided the game as Miami surprised the Bears 16-13 on a cold, snowy day in Chicago.

Quarterback Hugh Millen's 2-yard touchdown run with 13:09 remaining actually decided the game, but the Patriots had to survive the Bills' final threat.

With time running out, Jim Kelly drove Buffalo to the New England 35, but, on third down, he was sacked by defensive end Brent Williams for a 6-yard loss. On fourth down, with 43 seconds remaining, Kelly threw incomplete.

In all, the Patriots sacked Kelly 4 times and intercepted him 4 more times, including 2 by cornerback Maurice Hurst.

"Our offense stunk out the entire Northeast," Kelly said.

In Pittsburgh, the Oilers' offense wasn't far behind. The Steelers used six defensive backs against Houston's Run-and-Shoot, and, as snow fell, they intercepted 5 passes by Warren Moon and won 26-14. Moon also lost a fumble, and the 6 turnovers set up 16 Pittsburgh points.

Steelers safety Thomas Everett and cornerback Shawn Vincent each had 2 interceptions, while linebacker Bryan Hinkle intercepted a pass and recovered Moon's fumble. Gary Anderson kicked 4 field goals.

"It's hard to come out of that dome into the snow and cold," Pittsburgh cornerback Richard Shelton said of the Oilers.

It was Bears Weather in Chicago—a windchill factor of 4 degrees, wind blowing, and snowflakes swirling—but the Bears lost anyway, falling 16-13 in overtime to Miami. The loss snapped Chicago's five-game winning streak.

"We win as a team, we lose as a team, and this was a classic example of a team effort to lose a football game," Bears head coach Mike Ditka said.

The Dolphins' Pete Stoyanovich kicked 3 field goals, including 1 from 27 yards that won the game in overtime. But the Bears could have won it in regulation.

Miami tied the score 13-13 on Dan Marino's 2-yard touchdown pass to tight end Ferrell Edmunds with 1:51 left, a score set up when Jerry Fontenot's bad snap sailed over punter Maury Buford's head. When Buford picked up the ball and tried to kick it, the punt was blocked by Miami running back Marc Logan and recovered on the Bears' 4 by cornerback Paul Lankford.

Then Chicago's Kevin Butler was short on a 50-yard field goal attempt with 4 seconds to play.

The Saints lost in overtime, too, as Atlanta stayed in the playoff race with a come-from-behind 23-20 victory.

The Falcons were pinned on their own 2-yard line with time running out in overtime when Chris Miller fired a 57-yard pass to Michael Haynes. Atlanta rolled on from there to set up Norm Johnson for a 50-yard field-goal attempt, which he made with 1:57 left.

Haynes also caught 80- and 18-yard touchdown passes from Miller, the second one tying the game at 20-20 with 1:53 remaining in regulation.

Saints rookie Fred McAfee rushed for 138 yards, but lost a fumble at his own 15. The loose ball was recovered by nose tackle Tory Epps, setting up Haynes's tying score.

In Cincinnati, the Raiders pulled into a first-place tie with Denver in the AFC West with a 38-14 rout of the Bengals. Denver lost 13-10 at Seattle as the Seahawks' John L. Williams rushed for 109 yards.

The Raiders gained only 176 yards against the Bengals, but Los Angeles's special teams and defense scored or set up 31 points.

In the first half alone, Raiders safety Ronnie Lott set up a touchdown with an interception, Tim Brown returned a punt 75 yards for a score, and Elvis Patterson returned a fumble by Cincinnati punter Lee Johnson 3 yards for another touchdown.

At Phoenix, the Eagles' top-ranked defense forced 7 turnovers, recorded 3 sacks, and scored twice as Philadelphia thrashed the Cardinals 34-14. It was the Eagles' fourth victory in a row and the Cardinals' fifth consecutive loss. Eagles linebacker Seth Joyner returned a fumble 34 yards for a touchdown, then later jarred the ball loose from Phoenix quarterback Stan Gelbaugh. Defensive end Clyde Simmons recovered it in the end zone for another score. ■

QUOTE

Miami head coach Don Shula, when told several of his players sprinkled cayenne pepper in their shoes to keep warm in a victory over the Bears in snowy Chicago:

"It will be a cold day before I give credit to cayenne pepper for a victory."

Marv Rubin

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—New England wide receiver **Irving Fryar** caught 6 passes for 134 yards, including 1 of 50 yards for a touchdown and another of 34 yards that set up a touchdown, in the Patriots' 16-13 surprise of Buffalo.

AFC DEFENSE—Seattle linebacker **Rufus Porter** had 11 tackles, including 3 sacks, and forced 2 fumbles, 1 of which set up a field goal, in Seattle's 13-10 victory over Denver.

David Silverman

Fryar helped shock Buffalo.

Johnson terrorized Tampa Bay.

NFC OFFENSE—Detroit's **Barry Sanders** ran for a team-record 220 yards and 4 touchdowns to lead the Lions past the Vikings 34-14. Sanders scored on 17-, 45-, 4-, and 9-yard runs and set up one of his touchdowns with another 45-yard run.

NFC DEFENSE—Giants linebacker **Pepper Johnson** had 12 tackles, including a club-record 4½ sacks, and intercepted a pass as New York defeated Tampa Bay 21-14.

Jim Turner

Some heroes collect hugs instead of medals.

Some heroes turn loneliness into laughter.

Some heroes are Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

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WEEK 14

NOVEMBER 28

Buffalo and Washington Wrap Up Division Titles; New Orleans, Houston Fail to Clinch Theirs

After the game, the Buffalo Bills sported new hats with the inscription: "FOUR FOR FOUR...& LOOKING FOR MORE."

While looking ahead to the playoffs, the Bills were celebrating their fourth successive AFC East title, which they had earned with a 24-13 victory over the Jets.

"It's nothing that should be taken for granted...four straight championships for a team that in 1984 and 1985 had a couple of 2-14 seasons," head coach Marv Levy said.

Robert L. Smith

Bruce Smith—happy to be back in the lineup after missing 11 games with a bad knee—celebrated the Bills' fourth AFC East championship in a row.

While Levy and the Bills celebrated on the East Coast, Joe Gibbs and his Redskins did the same on the West Coast. Leading only 7-6 at halftime, Washington won the second half 20-0 to defeat the Rams 27-6 and claim Gibbs's fifth NFC East title in 11 years as head coach.

The day was less enjoyable for Houston and New Orleans. For the second week in a row, both teams squandered opportunities to clinch their division championships. The slumping Saints lost to the 49ers 38-24, and the Oilers were out-defensed by the Eagles 13-6.

At Buffalo, where the Bills improved their record to 11-2, Jim Kelly increased his season total to a club-record 28 touchdown passes with scoring strikes to Andre Reed and James Lofton. Thurman Thomas also ran for 124 yards.

The Bills welcomed back end Bruce Smith, the 1990 NFL defensive player of the year who had played in just one game since undergoing knee surgery in the summer. Smith had 6 tackles, including a sack.

Meanwhile, safety Mark Kelso set up a touchdown with an interception and recovered a fumble at the Bills' 7 in the fourth quarter to trigger Kelly's 93-yard drive to the clinching touchdown. It was Buffalo's seventeenth victory in a row at home.

In Anaheim, Washington's Wilber Marshall recovered a fumble at the Los Angeles 34 on the first series of the second half, and, on third down, Mark Rypien threw a 30-yard touchdown pass to Ricky Sanders. The Redskins' lead went from 7-6 to 14-6 and they never looked back. Rypien threw 3 touchdown passes in all.

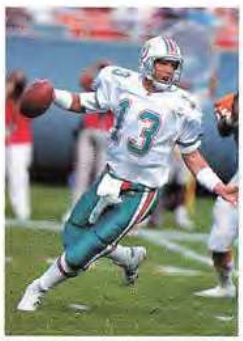
"They play the total game well," Rams head coach John Robinson said of the 12-1 Redskins. "They're good in everything."

The Rams were not—the loss was their seventh in a row.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Miami quarterback **Dan Marino** passed for 307 yards and 2 touchdowns to lead the Dolphins past Tampa Bay 33-14. Marino had a season total of 3,121 passing yards, giving him an NFL-record eight 3,000-yard seasons.

AFC DEFENSE—Chiefs linebacker **Tracy Simien** had 2 sacks, 4 other tackles, 1 pass deflection, and a fumble recovery that set up a field goal as Kansas City stopped Seattle 19-6.



Al Messerschmidt

Marino set another record.

Michael Mercanti/Philadelphia Daily News

Joyner overcame the flu.

NFC OFFENSE—49ers quarterback **Steve Bono** passed for 347 yards and 3 touchdowns to rally San Francisco to a 38-24 victory over New Orleans.

NFC DEFENSE—Despite a bad case of flu, Eagles linebacker **Seth Joyner** made 8 tackles (including 2 sacks), broke up 2 passes, forced 2 fumbles, and recovered 2 more as the Eagles beat the Oilers 13-6.

In San Francisco, the 49ers hung in the playoff race, stalling the Saints' bid for their first NFC West title. In rallying for their third consecutive victory, the 49ers scored 21 points in the last 4:09 behind Steve Bono, who passed for 347 yards and 3 touchdowns.

The Saints had taken a 24-17 lead on Steve Walsh's second touchdown pass to Floyd Turner, but Bono threw an 11-yard scoring pass to running back Dexter Carter to tie the score with 4:09 left. With 1:36 to go, Bono hit Jerry Rice with a short turn-in pass, and the brilliant wide receiver escaped on a 47-yard scoring play for a 31-24 San Francisco lead.

New Orleans then drove to the 49ers' 47-yard line, but Walsh, trying to down the ball to stop the clock, dropped it instead. Safety Johnny Jackson advanced the fumble 49 yards to the New Orleans 1 to set up the 49ers' final touchdown.

It was the third loss in a row for

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	11	2	0	Washington	12	1	0
Miami	7	6	0	Dallas	8	5	0
N.Y. Jets	7	6	0	Philadelphia	8	5	0
New England	4	9	0	N.Y. Giants	7	6	0
Indianapolis	1	12	0	Phoenix	4	9	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	9	4	0	Chicago	9	4	0
Cleveland	6	7	0	Detroit	9	4	0
Pittsburgh	5	8	0	Minnesota	6	7	0
Cincinnati	2	11	0	Green Bay	3	10	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	2	11	0
Denver	9	4	0	NFC West			
L.A. Raiders	9	4	0	New Orleans	9	4	0
Kansas City	8	5	0	Atlanta	8	5	0
Seattle	6	7	0	San Francisco	7	6	0
San Diego	3	10	0	L.A. Rams	3	10	0

Scores

AFC

Buffalo 24, N.Y. Jets 13

Cleveland 31, Indianapolis 0

Denver 20, New England 3

Kansas City 19, Seattle 6

L.A. Raiders 9, San Diego 7

NFC

Atlanta 35, Green Bay 31

Detroit 16, Chicago 6

San Francisco 38, New Orleans 24

Washington 27, L.A. Rams 6

Interconference

Cincinnati 27, N.Y. Giants 24

Dallas 20, Pittsburgh 10

Miami 33, Tampa Bay 14

Philadelphia 13, Houston 6

WEEK FOURTEEN

NICK'S KICKS PAY OFF FOR CHIEFS

The Kansas City Chiefs still were in the race for the AFC West title, but they had dropped two games in a row heading into the season's fourteenth week and they couldn't afford another loss.

Their opponent was Seattle, on the road—and the Chiefs responded by leading in first downs, yards, plays, and time of possession. Still, they were unable to score a touchdown until the middle of the fourth quarter.

David Boss

Lowery: better than ever

Instead, as they had done so many times in the past, they turned to the reliable right foot of Nick Lowery, who kicked four field goals without a miss in the first three quarters. Kansas City went on to win 19-6.

Lowery's big day was not a surprise. The 35-year-old Dartmouth graduate began the season as the most-accurate field-goal kicker in NFL history and had improved his statistics. Through 13 games, he had made 21 of 24 three-pointers including his last 18 in a row, and raised his career success percentage to 79.5.

Against the Seahawks, Lowery surpassed Kansas City career records for most field goals (he now had 280) and points (1,236). The records had been held by Jan Stenerud, the only full-time kicker inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"It's hard to believe that I had eleven tryouts with eight teams before landing a job with Kansas City [in 1980]," Lowery said after the game. "This is unbelievable, because I didn't think I'd make it anywhere in the league."

The one-time vagabond kicker held or shared four NFL records and also owned 13 other Kansas City records. In his twelfth year with the Chiefs, he was as focused as ever.

"Kicking is a mental challenge, and the ability to concentrate for those brief seconds is the difference between being a great kicker and being an average kicker," Lowery said.

"When I go out there on the field, the space from where the ball's going to be placed to where I start my approach is my office. No one can bother me or distract me."

the Saints, who had begun the season 9-1.

The AFC Central-leading Oilers ran into a defensive road block thrown up by the Eagles and failed to score a touchdown for the first time since 1989 in a 13-6 loss. It was Philadelphia's fifth victory in a row.

The Eagles' NFL-leading defense recovered 5 fumbles and never let the Oilers advance past the Philadelphia 24-yard line.

"When we hit on all cylinders, the sky's the limit for our defense," said Eagles linebacker Seth Joyner, who had 2 sacks, 2 forced fumbles, and 2 fumble recoveries.

The offense got a spark from backup quarterback Jeff Kemp, who took over when Jim McMahon suffered a hyper-extended elbow, and rallied the team from a 3-0 deficit to victory.

Joyner's fumble recovery at the Houston 8 set up the tying field goal, and Kemp then led Philadelphia to 10 more points, including a 21-yard touchdown pass to tight end Keith Jackson.

In Atlanta, Falcons quarterback Chris Miller, who was suffering from the flu, spent the first half in the locker room, getting fluids intravenously and listening to a radio broadcast of the game against Green Bay. He had a 102.4-degree fever.

Miller felt better by halftime, however, and the Falcons, who trailed 21-7, were glad he did. The 26-year-old quarterback started the second half and threw a pair of touchdown passes to Andre Rison, including one from 16 yards that won the game with 41 seconds left. Atlanta's 35-31 victory was the team's fifth in the last six games.

"I definitely see us in the playoffs," Miller said. "We will not be counted out of anything."

Atlanta was not only good but lucky. After the Packers went ahead 31-28, Green Bay punter Paul McJulien dropped a snap, picked it up, and was forced out of bounds short of a first down at his own 41 with 1:22 left. That set up Atlanta's winning touchdown drive.

In defeat, Green Bay's Mike Tomczak threw 3 touchdown passes, 2 to Sterling Sharpe.

The Raiders and Broncos remained tied for first in the AFC West. Los Angeles won its fourth consecutive game, holding off the Chargers 9-7 when defensive tackle Scott Davis blocked John Carney's 44-yard field goal attempt with 1:57 left.

James D. Smith

Michael Irvin broke away from cornerback Rod Woodson and went 66 yards with a pass for a fourth-quarter touchdown as Dallas beat Pittsburgh 20-10.

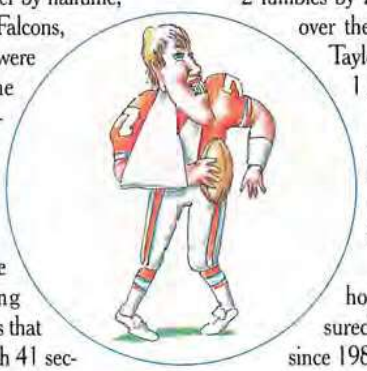
The Raiders' points came on 3 field goals by Jeff Jaeger, including a career-long 53-yard effort.

In Denver, John Elway overcame a sore passing shoulder to complete 18 of 25 attempts, leading the Broncos to a 20-3 victory over New England. Safety Dennis Smith led Denver's defense with 2 interceptions and a fumble recovery.

On Thanksgiving Day, Detroit pulled into a tie for first place with Chicago in the NFC Central. The Lions' defense intercepted 4 passes by Jim Harbaugh and recovered 2 fumbles by Harbaugh in a 16-6 victory over the Bears. Cornerback Terry Taylor had 2 interceptions, with 1 setting up a field goal.

"Turnovers hurt us like crazy," Chicago head coach Mike Ditka grumbled. "It's the worst thing I've ever seen in the history of football."

The Lions, who ran their home record to 7-0, also insured their first winning season since 1983.



QUOTE

New England defensive end Garin Veris, after John Elway shrugged off a sore passing shoulder to lead Denver past the Patriots 20-3:

"Like the coach told us, 'Never rule a guy out [of a game] until you see his name in the obituaries.'"

At Dallas, Steve Beuerlein continued to play well as a replacement for injured Troy Aikman. The former Raiders' quarterback passed for 217 yards, including a 66-yard, fourth-quarter touchdown strike to Michael Irvin that clinched the Cowboys' 20-10 victory over Pittsburgh.

Irvin had 8 catches for 157 yards, while Emmitt Smith ran for 109 yards and a touchdown.

In Indianapolis, Eric Dickerson returned to the Colts' lineup after a three-game suspension and ran for 117 yards against Cleveland to pass Jim Brown and move up to third on the NFL's all-time rushing list with 12,367 yards.

But the Colts lost 4 turnovers in the first half, and the Browns scored 24 points on the way to a 31-0 victory. Colts quarterback Jeff George was sacked 6 times, 3 of them by linebacker David Brandon. ■

Mary Rubin

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Bill Tessendorf, Head Trainer
CLEVELAND BROWNS

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DALLAS COWBOYS

Steve Antonopulos, Head Trainer
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Kent Falb, Head Trainer
DETROIT LIONS

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HOUSTON OILERS

Hunter Smith, Head Trainer
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

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LOS ANGELES RAIDERS

Jim Anderson, Head Trainer
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MIAMI DOLPHINS

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WEEK 15

DECEMBER 8

Oilers Win Division Title After 24-Year Drought; Three Other AFC Teams Clinch Playoff Berths

Houston's Ray Childress was ready to celebrate.

"I've been here seven years, and today is my happiest moment," the Pro Bowl defensive tackle said. "We've worked hard for this moment, and I'll enjoy it—at least until Wednesday."

The "moment" was Houston's 31-6 victory over Pittsburgh, which gave the Oilers the AFC Central Division championship. It was their first division title since 1967 in the AFL.

It not only took 24 years for Houston to win another title, it took two extra weeks. The Oilers had lost their previous two games, missing opportunities to clinch the championship.

As the season headed into its final two weeks, three other AFC teams—Western Division contenders Denver, Kansas City, and the Raiders—also sewed up playoff berths. With AFC East-champion Buffalo already in the field, five of the conference's six playoff spots had been filled.

In the NFC, however, there still was a mad dash for the wire, with five spots open and only Eastern Division-champion Washington in the playoffs.

Marv Rubin

QUOTE

Raiders defensive end Greg Townsend, trying to shake off his team's 30-27 overtime loss to Buffalo:

"There's no use crying over spilt milk...I'm just going to wipe it up and get me another glass."

In Houston, the Oilers, who had not been running the ball well, got a boost from Allen Pinkett, who rushed for 98 yards on just 16 carries and had 7- and 11-yard touchdown runs.

"Our key is the running game," wide receiver Haywood Jeffires said. "If it works, the offense works."

Jeffires worked, too, catching a 16-yard scoring pass from Warren Moon, and linebacker Al Smith returned a fumble 70 yards for a touchdown. The Oilers also sacked Pittsburgh's Neil O'Donnell 7 times, including 2 each by Childress and end Sean Jones.

In Cleveland, Denver earned a playoff bid and took over first place in the AFC West by outfighting the Browns 17-7 on the passing of John Elway and the fierce play of the defense.

The Broncos' defense sacked Bernie Kosar 5 times and limited the Browns to 9 first downs. Elway, playing with a sore shoulder, threw touchdown passes to Michael Young and Vance Johnson and ripped a 60-yard pass to Steve Sewell that set up an insurance field goal.

John Elway threw 2 touchdown passes and set up a field goal with a 60-yard bomb to lead Denver past Cleveland. The victory earned a playoff berth.

Al Messerschmidt

"I don't know how far the ball went, but it looked like it went about sixty yards in the air," Denver coach Dan Reeves said of the bomb to Sewell. "He made a great throw."

It was a great day for Reeves, who won his 100th regular-season game as a head coach.

The Raiders fell out of a first-place tie with the Broncos when they lost in overtime to Buffalo 30-27, but they clinched a playoff berth anyway.

Los Angeles led 27-14 in the fourth quarter, before Jim Kelly (347 yards passing, 2 touchdown passes) rallied the Bills.

"He believes he's Bobby

BEUERLEIN FINDS A HOME COMING TO THE RESCUE IN DALLAS

As the playoffs approached, four of the NFL's hottest teams were being led by backup quarterbacks.

Steve Beuerlein (Dallas), Jeff Kemp (Philadelphia), Steve Bono (San Francisco), and Erik Kramer (Detroit) all had replaced injured quarterbacks and led their playoff-contending teams to important victories.

No one, however, was happier with his new quarterback than Dallas head coach Jimmy Johnson.

"Steve [Beuerlein] wasn't with us in training camp, but he has operated the team extremely well," Johnson said after Beuerlein directed a 23-14 victory over slumping New Orleans in week 15. "He has made some outstanding plays just on ability alone."

The situation was in sharp contrast to 1990, when starter Troy Aikman went out with a separated shoulder in the fifteenth game of the season. Needing one victory to earn a wild-card playoff berth, Dallas scored a total of 10 points in the final two games—and lost twice.

Determined he wouldn't let that happen again, Johnson sent a fourth-round draft choice to the Raiders in August in exchange for Beuerlein, who had started a total of 15 games during the 1988 and 1989 seasons. The Raiders had held him out of action all of 1990 after a salary dispute.

Johnson was happy with Beuerlein.

On November 24, when Aikman went out with a knee injury early in the third quarter against unbeaten Washington, Beuerlein took over and led the Cowboys to a 24-21 victory. Then he directed the team to wins over Pittsburgh and New Orleans, leading the Cowboys to 10 fourth-quarter points to beat the Saints.

"Last year we panicked when Troy went out with an injury," Dallas running back Emmitt Smith said. "But not with Steve in there. He's so confident. He just gets back there and tells you what you're going to do."

"When I call a play in the huddle, I want every player to think it's going to work for a touchdown," Beuerlein said. "That's the type of confidence I earned in L.A., and I plan on doing it here. All I have to do is be myself."

James D. Smith

WEEK FIFTEEN

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	12	2	0	Washington	13	1	0
Miami	8	6	0	Dallas	9	5	0
N.Y. Jets	7	7	0	Philadelphia	9	5	0
New England	5	9	0	N.Y. Giants	7	7	0
Indianapolis	1	13	0	Phoenix	4	10	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	10	4	0	Chicago	10	4	0
Cleveland	6	8	0	Detroit	10	4	0
Pittsburgh	5	9	0	Minnesota	7	7	0
Cincinnati	2	12	0	Green Bay	3	11	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	2	12	0
Denver	10	4	0	NFC West			
Kansas City	9	5	0	Atlanta	9	5	0
L.A. Raiders	9	5	0	New Orleans	9	5	0
Seattle	6	8	0	San Francisco	8	6	0
San Diego	3	11	0	L.A. Rams	3	11	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 30, L.A. Raiders 27 (OT)
Denver 17, Cleveland 7
Houston 31, Pittsburgh 6
Kansas City 20, San Diego 17 (OT)
Miami 37, Cincinnati 13
New England 23, Indianapolis 17 (OT)
NFC
Atlanta 31, L.A. Rams 14
Chicago 27, Green Bay 13
Dallas 23, New Orleans 14
Minnesota 26, Tampa Bay 24
Philadelphia 19, N.Y. Giants 14
Washington 20, Phoenix 14
Interconference
Detroit 34, N.Y. Jets 20
San Francisco 24, Seattle 22

Layne," Bills general manager Bill Polian said of Kelly. "He's never lost a game in his life. Time just ran out."

To win this one, Kelly had to overcome his own kicker. Scott Norwood started the day with a streak of 9 consecutive field goals, but missed 3 attempts and an extra point against the Raiders before booming a 42-yard field goal to end the contest. Among his misses was one from 36 yards that could have won the game with 11 seconds remaining in regulation.

The high-flying Eagles won their sixth consecutive game when Jeff Kemp (16) replaced injured Jim McMahon and rallied Philadelphia to a 19-14 victory over Lorenzo Freeman and the Giants.

The winning kick was set up by safety Mark Kelso's interception at the Bills' 36 and Kelly's 31-yard pass to Andre Reed. Kelly had sent the game into overtime with a 9-yard touchdown pass to James Lofton with a minute left.

Special teams kept the Bills in the game in the first half: Al Edwards's 91-yard kickoff return accounted for a touchdown and Clifford Hicks's 59-yard punt return set up another.

In Kansas City, the Chiefs grabbed a playoff spot when they rallied behind backup quarterback Mark Vlasic to beat the Chargers in overtime.

Kansas City trailed 14-0 at halftime, before Vlasic, who came from the Chargers as a Plan B free agent, replaced slumping Steve DeBerg. The 28-year-old Vlasic completed 12 of 18 passes, 1 for a score, as the Chiefs won 20-17.

Nick Lowery won the game for the Chiefs with his twentieth successive field goal, from 18 yards with 3:34 left in overtime. It was set up by Barry Word's 28-yard run to the San Diego 1.

In Giants Stadium, backup quarterback Jeff Kemp led the Eagles to their sixth consecutive win, 19-14 over the Giants. It was Kemp's second victory in a row as a replacement for injured Jim McMahon.

Philadelphia trailed 14-3 when McMahon left the game in the second quarter with four broken ribs—he was declared out for at least the rest of the regular season—but Kemp threw an 8-yard touchdown pass to Calvin Williams in the last minute of the first half, and Roger Ruzek kicked 3 second-half field goals.

Although Phil Simms threw 2 first-half touchdown passes to David Meggett, the Giants were held to just 151 total yards by the Eagles' NFL-leading defense. The loss eliminated the defending Super Bowl champions from playoff contention.

While the Giants were going down, the Lions were going up. Barry Sanders ran 14 and 51 yards for touchdowns, Erik Kramer threw a 73-yard touchdown pass to Willie Green, and linebacker Tracy Hayworth scored on a 28-yard fumble return as Detroit beat the Jets 34-20.

The victory, the Lions' fourth in a row, capped an 8-0 record at home, and enabled them to reach 10 victories for the first time since 1970.

"That was very important to us," Sanders said of the 10 victories. "Most people thought it was an unrealistic goal, but it's just an indication of how much better we are."

Not all the news was good. Pro Bowl nose tackle Jerry Ball and offensive tackle Eric Sanders suffered season-ending knee injuries, the fourth and fifth starters the Lions had lost for the year.

In Chicago, the Bears snapped a two-game losing streak and stayed in a first-place tie with the Lions in the NFC Central with a 27-13 victory over Green Bay. It was head coach Mike Ditka's 100th regular-season victory.

Brad Muster ran for 2 touchdowns, and Wendell Davis caught 20- and 35-yard touchdown passes from Jim Harbaugh.

At Phoenix, the Redskins clinched home-field advantage throughout the playoffs—but it wasn't easy. The fired-up Cardinals took a 14-0 halftime lead on a pair of short touchdown runs by Johnny Johnson, before Washington scored 20 unanswered points in a 20-14 victory. It was the Cardinals' sixth loss in a row.

Washington's Earnest Byner ran for 116 yards, Mark Rypien threw touchdown passes to Terry Orr and Ricky Sanders, and Chip Lohmiller kicked 2 field goals.

Eyeing the last AFC playoff berth, the Dolphins got 3 touchdown passes from Dan Marino—2 to Mark Clayton—and blasted Cincinnati 37-13, their fifth win in six games.

In Tampa, the Vikings gave Jerry Burns an early retirement gift by holding off the Buccaneers 26-24 as Herschel Walker ran for 126 yards, including a 71-yard burst for a touchdown. The 64-year-old Burns had announced during the week that he was retiring after the season. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

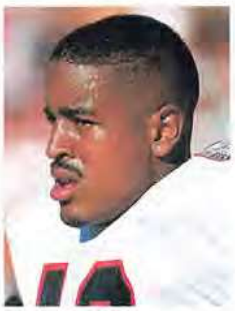
Kelly brought Buffalo back.

AFC OFFENSE—Buffalo quarterback **Jim Kelly** passed for 347 yards and 2 touchdowns to rally the Bills to a 30-27 victory over the Raiders in overtime.

AFC DEFENSE—Houston defensive tackle **Ray Childress** had 7 solo tackles, including 2 sacks, and forced a fumble as the Oilers routed Pittsburgh 31-6.

NFC OFFENSE—San Francisco wide receiver **John Taylor** caught 7 passes for 113 yards, including the 15-yard touchdown pass from Steve Bono with 1:08 remaining that beat Seattle 24-22. Bono threw for 3 scores.

NFC DEFENSE—Atlanta safety **Brian Jordan** had 2 sacks, 5 other tackles, an interception, and a quarterback pressure as the Falcons defeated the Rams 31-14 and moved into a tie for first in the NFC West.



Jordan led Atlanta.

Jim Turner Bob Rosato Peter Brouillet

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WEEK

16

DECEMBER 14

Cowboys Win a Big One to Gain Wild-Card Berth; Four Other NFC Teams Make Playoffs; Broncos Win AFC West

Immediately after his team's victory over Philadelphia, Dallas head coach Jimmy Johnson already was looking ahead.

"It was the biggest win so far since I've been in Dallas," Johnson said. "But we've got bigger wins coming."

This one was awfully big, however. The Cowboys—those same Cowboys who were 1-15 as recently as 1989—beat the streaking Eagles 25-13 in Philadelphia to win their fourth game in a row, clinch a wild-card playoff berth, and snap the Eagles' six-game winning streak.

The loss cost the Eagles their own spot in the playoffs and ended their eight-game winning streak over Dallas.

Dallas was one of five NFC teams—Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, and New Orleans were the others—to qualify for the playoffs in a pivotal weekend. As the NFL season headed into its final week, 11 of 12 playoff berths had been filled, three of them by teams that had been absent from postseason play for many years.

Besides Dallas, which was making its first playoff appearance since 1985, Atlanta was joining the party for the first time since 1982, and Detroit for the first time since 1983.

Meanwhile, the Broncos, already in the playoffs, clinched the AFC West title when they rallied to defeat Phoenix, while the Raiders lost to New Orleans. Thus, only two division races—the NFC West (Falcons or Saints) and NFC Central (Bears or Lions)—were still undecided.

In Philadelphia, the Eagles led Dallas 10-8 in the first minute of the fourth quarter, but Cowboys wide receiver Kelvin Martin streaked 85 yards on a punt return for the go-ahead touchdown, and Dallas never trailed again. The defense kept the Eagles at bay, sacking Jeff Kemp, who was subbing for the injured Jim McMahon, 7 times.

David Drapkin

Wide receiver Kelvin Martin gave Dallas the lead for good against the Eagles with an 85-yard punt return for a touchdown. With the 25-13 victory, the Cowboys clinched their first playoff berth since 1985.

"We needed a winning attitude," Dallas wide receiver Michael Irvin said, "and now we've got it."

Quarterback Bobby Hebert certainly had it. After sitting out six weeks with an injured shoulder, Hebert returned to the Saints, who had lost four games in a row after a 9-1 start, and led them to an impressive victory.

The 31-year-old quarterback passed for 320 yards and directed an offense that controlled the ball for more than 40 minutes, as the Saints stunned the playoff-bound Raiders 27-0 to earn the third playoff bid in franchise history.

"I thought Bobby's presence would make the difference, and it did," New Orleans linebacker Pat Swilling said. "He had an unbelievable game."

Although the game was close until the final two minutes when New Orleans scored 2 touchdowns in 18 seconds (1 on safety Brett Maxie's 31-yard interception return), it was one-sided statistically. The Saints dominated in yards (475-117) and first downs (26-6).

The AFC West-champion Broncos, who benefited from the Raiders' loss, beat Phoenix 24-19, but the Cardinals didn't go quietly.

Denver was rolling along with a 17-6 lead in the third quarter when Ernie Jones of Phoenix took a short pass from Chris Chandler, eluded three tacklers, and ran 45 yards for a touchdown. Greg Davis followed with a pair of field goals, both set up on interceptions by rookie cornerback Aeneas

BIG NOISE IN GEORGIA

In their first 25 seasons, the Atlanta Falcons finished with a winning record five times. Their last winning season was 1982.

But these are heady days in the old Southern city. In October, the once lowly baseball Braves won the National League pennant. And, in December, the Falcons were one of the hottest teams in the NFL, and on their way to the playoffs.

Atlanta's 26-13 victory over Seattle with a week to go gave the Falcons five consecutive wins, a 7-1 record in their previous eight games, and the team's first playoff bid since 1982. One more victory would wrap up the NFC Western Division title.

McKyer (22) and Sanders played catch in the secondary.

"Right now I'm on cloud nine," veteran defensive end Tim Green said. "It's like when you're a kid and it's Christmas with all of those presents. It's complete elation.

"The Braves showed us the way, but regardless of what happened with them, Jerry Glanville was destined to turn this team around."

Glanville came to Atlanta in 1990 from Houston to take over a team that had gone 3-13 in 1989. "We're going to attack people on both sides of the football," he promised. His first group of attackers improved to 5-11. His second now was 10-5.

"This team is full of courageous people," the coach said after the victory over Seattle.

It was full of talented people, too. Against Seattle, Chris Miller threw 2 touchdown passes, including one of 30 yards to Michael Haynes, who sported 9 touchdowns and a 21.6-yard average per catch. Safety Brian Jordan sacked Seattle quarterback Kelly Stouffer for a safety. And Norm Johnson kicked a 42-yard field goal, his fifteenth successful three-pointer in a row.

Then, there were the club's talkative cornerbacks, Tim McKyer and Deion Sanders. Early in the game, Sanders made a one-handed interception and lateraled the ball to McKyer.

So, when McKyer intercepted a pass in the third quarter, he lateraled to Sanders, who ran 48 yards for a touchdown. Sanders also broke up a Seattle drive with another interception.

"The Falcons in the playoffs," Sanders said after the game. "What's the world coming to?"

Jimmy Cribb

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WEEK SIXTEEN

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T	NFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	13	2	0	Washington	14	1	0
Miami	8	7	0	Dallas	10	5	0
N.Y. Jets	7	8	0	Philadelphia	9	6	0
New England	6	9	0	N.Y. Giants	7	8	0
Indianapolis	1	14	0	Phoenix	4	11	0
AFC Central				NFC Central			
Houston	11	4	0	Chicago	11	4	0
Cleveland	6	9	0	Detroit	11	4	0
Pittsburgh	6	9	0	Minnesota	8	7	0
Cincinnati	2	13	0	Green Bay	3	12	0
AFC West				Tampa Bay	2	13	0
Denver	11	4	0	NFC West			
Kansas City	9	6	0	Atlanta	10	5	0
L.A. Raiders	9	6	0	New Orleans	10	5	0
Seattle	6	9	0	San Francisco	9	6	0
San Diego	4	11	0	L.A. Rams	3	12	0

Scores

AFC
Buffalo 35, Indianapolis 7
Houston 17, Cleveland 14
Pittsburgh 17, Cincinnati 10
San Diego 38, Miami 30
New England 6, N.Y. Jets 3
NFC
Chicago 27, Tampa Bay 0
Dallas 25, Philadelphia 13
Detroit 21, Green Bay 17
Minnesota 20, L.A. Rams 14
Washington 34, N.Y. Giants 17
Interconference
Atlanta 26, Seattle 13
Denver 24, Phoenix 19
New Orleans 27, L.A. Raiders 0
San Francisco 28, Kansas City 14

Williams. Suddenly the Cardinals led 19-17.

With time running out, Denver quarterback John Elway couldn't believe the score.

"I was thinking to myself, 'How can we be losing this game with four minutes left?'" Elway said later. "I was thinking how it was going to feel if we lost. 'Just give me another chance,' I thought—and the defense did."

Shrugging off 3 earlier interceptions, Elway led a 66-yard drive for the winning touchdown, which he scored on a 4-yard scramble around right end with 1:46 remaining.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Mark Clayton scored two touchdowns, but Miami lost to San Diego 38-30.

With their victories in Chicago and Green Bay, respectively, the Bears and Lions not only clinched playoff bids, but remained tied for first in the NFC Central Division.

In Chicago, where the wind-chill factor was minus 3 degrees, the Bears rushed for 182 yards without injured Neal Anderson, intercepted 3 passes by Jeff Carlson, held Tampa Bay to 7 first downs, and cruised 27-0.

"You want momentum going into the playoffs," Bears defensive end Richard Dent said. "We're starting to get momentum. I feel like this is our year."

Dent sacked Carlson, a replacement for injured Vinny Testaverde, 3 times and intercepted a pass. Mark Green ran for 82 yards and 2 touchdowns.

In Green Bay, the Lions recorded their first victory outdoors all season, stopping the Packers 21-17, despite a wind-chill factor of minus 18. It was Detroit's fifth victory in a row. With 11 victories, the Lions tied a club regular-season record set in 1962.

"We're in the playoffs, and I can't believe it," Detroit head coach Wayne Fontes said. "I'm very, very proud of this team."

In making Fontes proud, Erik Kramer threw 19- and 3-yard touchdown passes to Robert Clark, while Mel Gray scored the winning touchdown on a twisting 78-yard punt return. With one week to go, Gray led the NFL in both kickoff and punt returns.

In Indianapolis, Buffalo clinched home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs by breezing past the Colts 35-7. Jim Kelly attempted only 11 passes, but completed 9—3 of them for touchdowns.

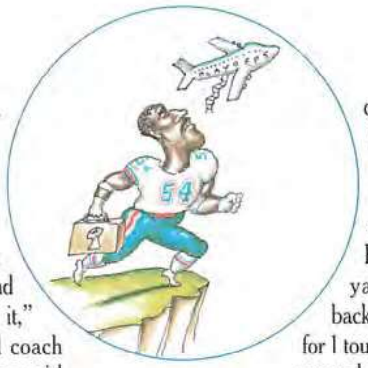
The Bills' Thurman Thomas, the NFL's leading rusher, sprained his ankle in the first quarter, but Kenneth Davis came in to run for 90 yards and score twice, once on a 14-yard pass from Kelly. Buffalo also set club single-season records for points (444), total offense (6,168 yards), and passing yards (3,747).

The Jets and Dolphins started the weekend scrambling for the AFC's final playoff berth. Because both teams lost, nothing was resolved.

The Jets went down first, losing 6-3 to the Patriots, who got 45- and 41-yard field goals from Charlie Baumann and 112 rushing yards from Leonard Russell.

With New York losing, all the Dolphins had to do was win at San Diego to go to the playoffs. Miami led 23-10 after three quarters.

But the Chargers, scoring more points in the fourth quarter—28—than they had in any *game* this season, shocked Miami 38-30. John Friesz passed 25 yards to running back Ronnie Harmon for 1 touchdown, and 238-pound Rod Bernstine scored 3 more on runs of 5, 1, and 63 yards.



Marv Rubin

QUOTE

Miami linebacker E. J. Junior, after the Dolphins lost to San Diego and failed to clinch a playoff berth early:

"I guess we love suspense."

In defeat, Marino passed for 313 yards and 3 touchdowns (2 to Mark Clayton) and ran 10 yards for another score. He finished with 35,131 career passing yards to move past Joe Montana into fourth place on the NFL's all-time list.

In San Francisco, the 49ers stayed in the playoff hunt by beating playoff-bound Kansas City 28-14, their fifth victory in a row. But San Francisco was eliminated when New Orleans won Monday night.

Steve Bono threw 3 touchdown passes against the Chiefs, including 2 to Jerry Rice. When Bono sprained his knee in the third quarter, he was relieved by Steve Young, who had started the team's first nine games before injuring his knee. ■

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—San Diego's **Rod Bernstine** ran for 104 yards and 3 touchdowns, including a 63-yard sprint that clinched the Chargers' 38-30 comeback victory over Miami.

AFC DEFENSE—Houston defensive end **William Fuller** had 7 solo tackles, including 2 sacks, and broke up a pass as the Oilers held off Cleveland 17-14 to tie a club record with 11 victories.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Bernstine destroyed Miami.

Dent had 3 sacks.

Scott Cunningham

NFC OFFENSE—Saints quarterback **Bobby Hebert**, who had missed six games with an injured shoulder, passed for 320 yards to lead New Orleans to a playoff-clinching 27-0 win over the Raiders.

NFC DEFENSE—Bears defensive end **Richard Dent** had 3 sacks, 1 other tackle, and set up a touchdown with an interception as Chicago stifled Tampa Bay 27-0.

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WEEK 17

DECEMBER 21

Lions See Themselves Crowned NFC Central Champions on TV as Bears Lose; Seven More Coaches Depart

On the night the Detroit Lions clinched the NFC Central Division title, head coach Wayne Fontes and his team watched it happen on television.

The Lions needed a loss by division rival Chicago to win the championship—and they got it two days before Christmas as the fast-finishing 49ers routed the Bears 52-14 on Monday night.

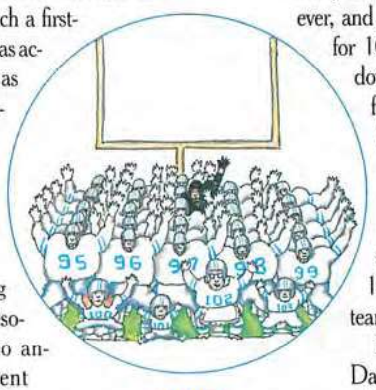
"I'm just so excited you can't believe it," said Fontes, who led the Lions to a club-record 12 victories, six in a row to close the regular season, the team's first division title since 1983, and a first-round playoff bye.

Bob Rosato

In a battle for the AFC's last playoff berth, the Jets rallied to beat Miami 23-20 in overtime on Raul Allegre's 30-yard field goal, his third of the game.

New Orleans also clinched a division title, smothering the Cardinals 27-3 to win the NFC West—its first division championship ever.

Meanwhile, in Miami, the Jets edged the Dolphins 23-20 in overtime to grab the last playoff berth. In San Diego, the Broncos beat the Chargers 17-14 to clinch a first-round bye. And there was activity off the field, too, as seven head coaches parted company with their teams, bringing the total to eight coaching changes in the month of December alone.



The list of departing coaches joining Minnesota's Jerry Burns, who announced his retirement earlier, included four-time Super Bowl winner Chuck Noll of Pittsburgh, John Robinson of the Rams, Lindy Infante of Green Bay, Dan Henning of San Diego, Sam Wyche of Cincinnati, Chuck Knox of Seattle, and Richard Williamson of Tampa Bay. Wyche was replaced within days by 32-year-old David Shula.

The Lions had put themselves in position to win the NFC Central title by edging the Bills 17-14 in Buffalo on Eddie Murray's 21-yard field goal in overtime. The Bills already had clinched home-field advantage through the playoffs and were resting quarterback Jim Kelly, running back Thurman Thomas, and wide receiver James Lofton, all nursing injuries.

Still, Detroit's victory was impressive. The Lions snapped Buffalo's 17-game winning streak at home, and did it after losing four of their own starters to injuries during the game. By the end of the day, Detroit was missing nine starters (including five previously lost for the season).

Barry Sanders was healthy, however, and he dodged and darted for 108 yards and 1 touchdown and caught 3 passes for 53 additional yards. Sanders finished second in the NFL with a club-record 1,548 rushing yards and scored a league-leading 17 touchdowns, another team mark.

For Buffalo, Kenneth Davis ran for 118 yards in relief of Thomas, and Frank Reich passed for 2 touchdowns in relief of Kelly.

In Phoenix, the Saints forced 7 turnovers to upend the Cardinals and win the NFC West. Turnovers led to 24 of New Orleans's 27 points. Safety Gene Atkins set up 2 touchdowns with 3 interceptions.

"Being raised in New Orleans and being part of this championship is an incredible feeling," said Saints quarterback Bobby Hebert, who threw a touchdown pass to Floyd Turner. "You almost want to cry—it's that good of a feeling."

The Saints got their chance to win the division when Atlanta lost to Dallas 31-27 earlier in the

QUOTE

Atlanta quarterback Chris Miller, after throwing incomplete in the end zone on the last play as the Falcons lost to Dallas 31-27:

"They dropped the whole team and their families back there in the end zone, and there wasn't any lane."

Marv Rubin

Pro Bowl Roster

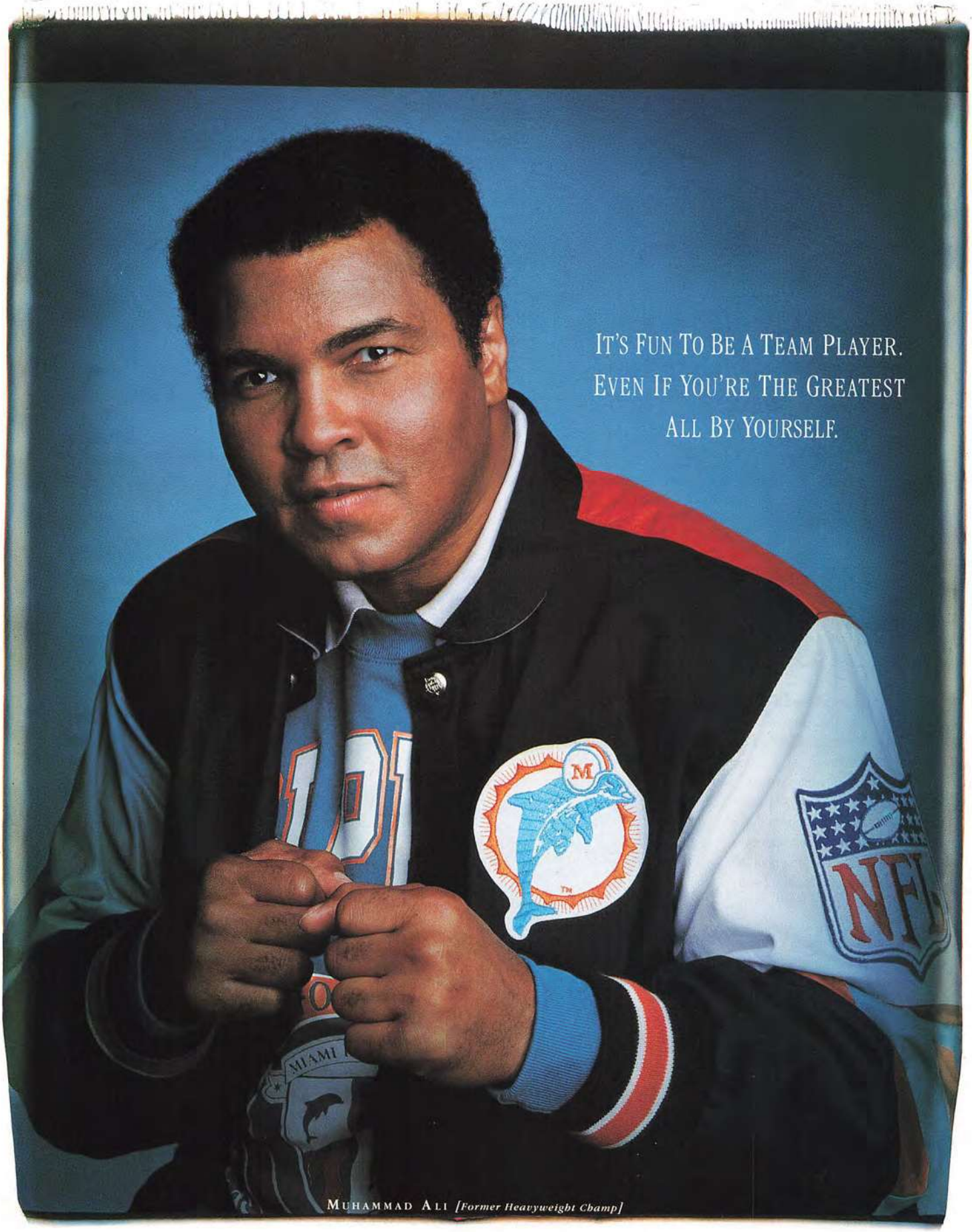
American Football Conference

OFFENSE
Wide Receivers
*Andre Reed, *Buffalo*
*Haywood Jeffires, *Houston*
James Lofton, *Buffalo*
Mark Clayton, *Miami*
Tackles
*Bruce Armstrong, *New England*
*Anthony Muñoz, *Cincinnati*
Richmond Webb, *Miami*
Guards
*Mike Munchak, *Houston*
*Steve Wisniewski, *L.A. Raiders*
Jim Ritcher, *Buffalo*
Centers
*Bruce Matthews, *Houston*
Don Mosebar, *L.A. Raiders*
Tight Ends
*Marv Cook, *New England*
Ethan Horton, *L.A. Raiders*
Quarterbacks
*Jim Kelly, *Buffalo*
Warren Moon, *Houston*
Dan Marino, *Miami*
Running Backs
*Thurman Thomas, *Buffalo*
*Christian Okoye, *Kansas City*
Gaston Green, *Denver*
Marion Butts, *San Diego*
DEFENSE
Ends
*Greg Townsend, *L.A. Raiders*
*William Fuller, *Houston*
Neil Smith, *Kansas City*
Interior Linemen
*Michael Dean Perry, *Cleveland*
Ray Childress, *Houston*
Outside Linebackers
*Derrick Thomas, *Kansas City*
*Cornelius Bennett, *Buffalo*
Darryl Talley, *Buffalo*
Inside Linebackers
*Junior Seau, *San Diego*
*Al Smith, *Houston*
Karl Mecklenburg, *Denver*
Cornerbacks
*Cris Dishman, *Houston*
*Gill Byrd, *San Diego*
Rod Woodson, *Pittsburgh*
Safeties
*Ronnie Lott, *L.A. Raiders*
*Steve Atwater, *Denver*
Dennis Smith, *Denver*
SPECIALISTS
Punter
Jeff Gossett, *L.A. Raiders*
Placekicker
Jeff Jaeger, *L.A. Raiders*
Kick Return Specialist
Tim Brown, *L.A. Raiders*
Special Teamer
Steve Tasker, *Buffalo*

National Football Conference

OFFENSE
Wide Receivers
*Michael Irvin, *Dallas*
*Jerry Rice, *San Francisco*
Andre Rison, *Atlanta*
Gary Clark, *Washington*
Tackles
*Jim Lachey, *Washington*
*Lomas Brown, *Detroit*
Chris Hinton, *Atlanta*
Guards
*Randall McDaniel, *Minnesota*
*Guy McIntyre, *San Francisco*
Mark Schlereth, *Washington*
Centers
*Jay Hilgenberg, *Chicago*
Bart Oates, *N.Y. Giants*
Tight Ends
*Jay Novacek, *Dallas*
Steve Jordan, *Minnesota*
Quarterbacks
*Mark Rypien, *Washington*
Troy Aikman, *Dallas*
Chris Miller, *Atlanta*
Running Backs
*Barry Sanders, *Detroit*
*Emmitt Smith, *Dallas*
Earnest Byner, *Washington*
Neal Anderson, *Chicago*
DEFENSE
Ends
*Reggie White, *Philadelphia*
*Clyde Simmons, *Philadelphia*
Charles Mann, *Washington*
Interior Linemen
*Jerome Brown, *Philadelphia*
Jerry Ball, *Detroit*
Outside Linebackers
*Pat Swilling, *New Orleans*
*Seth Joyner, *Philadelphia*
Charles Haley, *San Francisco*
Inside Linebackers
*Vaughan Johnson, *New Orleans*
*Sam Mills, *New Orleans*
Mike Singletary, *Chicago*
Cornerbacks
*Darrell Green, *Washington*
*Deion Sanders, *Atlanta*
Eric Allen, *Philadelphia*
Safeties
*Tim McDonald, *Phoenix*
*Mark Carrier, *Chicago*
Bennie Blades, *Detroit*
SPECIALISTS
Punter
Rich Camarillo, *Phoenix*
Placekicker
Chip Lohmiller, *Washington*
Kick Return Specialist
Mel Gray, *Detroit*
Special Teamer
Bennie Thompson, *New Orleans*

*Prospective starters



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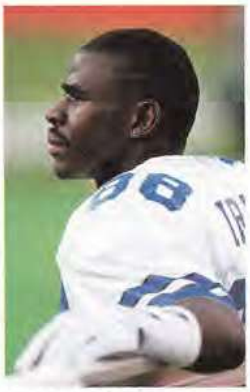
PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AFC OFFENSE—Wide receiver **J.J. Birden** of Kansas City caught 8 passes for 188 yards, including touchdowns of 57 and 53 yards, as the Chiefs stopped the Raiders 27-21.

AFC DEFENSE—Pittsburgh cornerback **Richard Shelton** intercepted 3 passes, returning 1 of them 57 yards for the deciding touchdown, made 8 tackles, and forced a fumble to lead the Steelers over the Browns 17-10.



Peter Brouillet

Irvin drove Atlanta crazy.

Tony Tomsic

Shelton had 3 interceptions.

NFC OFFENSE—Dallas wide receiver **Michael Irvin** caught 10 passes for 169 yards, including one of 58 yards for a touchdown, in the Cowboys' 31-27 victory over the Falcons.

NFC DEFENSE—Saints safety **Gene Atkins** had a club-record-tying 3 interceptions, setting up 2 touchdowns, and made 8 tackles as New Orleans clinched the NFC West title with a 27-3 victory over Phoenix.

day. The Cowboys finished with a five-game winning streak and their best record since 1983 (11-5). The loss snapped the Falcons' own five-game winning streak.

"We don't care where we go," Dallas head coach Jimmy Johnson said of the upcoming playoffs. "All I know is that a couple of years ago, everybody was laughing at us. To reach this point after where we started a couple of years ago [1-15 record in 1989] is remarkable."

The game had a month's worth of highlights. The Cowboys' Emmitt Smith ran for 160 yards and 2 touchdowns and wound up as the NFL's leading rusher (1,563 yards). Teammate Michael Irvin caught 10 passes for 169 yards and 1 touchdown and finished with an NFL-leading 1,523 receiving yards. Dallas's Alexander Wright scored on a club-record, 102-yard kickoff return, longest of the NFL season.

For Atlanta, Chris Miller passed for 3 touchdowns, including 67- and 43-yard bombs to Michael Haynes, but he was incomplete on 3 potential game-winning passes from the Dallas 16 in the final 11 seconds.

In Miami, the Jets and Dolphins wrestled for the last playoff berth, and New York seized it with its overtime victory on Raul Allegre's 30-yard field goal. Signed in midweek to replace the injured Pat Leahy, Allegre kicked 3 field goals, including one from 44 yards on the last play of regulation, which sent the game into overtime at 20-20.

Miami had taken a 20-17 lead with 44 seconds left on Dan Marino's 1-yard touchdown pass to tight end Ferrell Edmunds.

"The fat lady may have been warming her throat up, but she wasn't singing yet," Jets running back Johnny Hector said later. Hector warmed up for the playoffs by running for 132 yards, while Ken O'Brien drove the Jets 44 yards to the tying field goal and 65 to the winning field goal.

In San Diego, the Broncos just got past the Chargers. It was Denver's fourth successive win, but it wasn't easy. San Diego linebacker Leslie O'Neal was credited with 4½ sacks against John Elway.

"We kept shooting ourselves in the foot," Elway said. "But we got it done defensively."

The Broncos' defense set up 10 points with big plays, including safety Steve Atwater's 49-yard interception return, which led to a touchdown.

Kevin Terrell

Rookie Todd Marinovich of the Raiders passed for 3 touchdowns against Kansas City, but the Chiefs won anyway, 27-21, to clinch home-field advantage for their AFC Wild Card Game against Los Angeles.

cent completion rate), and Matt Bahr kicked a 54-yard field goal.

Houston's Haywood Jeffires caught 4 passes to finish with an NFL-leading 100 receptions.

In beating the Bears, the 49ers, who missed the playoffs, finished with a six-game winning streak and a 10-6 record. Steve Young passed for 3 touchdowns, including 3- and 69-yard strikes to Jerry Rice. Cornerback Don Griffin returned a fumble 99 yards for a touchdown.

In Los Angeles, the Raiders started rookie Todd Marinovich against Kansas City, because regular quarterback Jay Schroeder had two sprained ankles. In his first NFL regular-season game, Marinovich threw 3 touchdown passes, 2 of them to Tim Brown.

But Kansas City's Steve DeBerg was sharp, too, completing 14 of 20 attempts, including 57- and 53-yard scoring bombs to J.J. Birden as the Chiefs won 27-21. The victory gave the Chiefs home-field advantage for their wild-card playoff rematch against the Raiders.

In Philadelphia, the Eagles weren't going to the playoffs, but they finished with a 10-6 record and a dramatic 24-22 victory over Washington.

Trying to go 15-1, the Redskins forged a 22-21 lead with 2:34 left on Chip Lohmiller's 35-yard field goal, his fifth of the game. But the Eagles' Jeff Kemp completed 6 of 8 passes during a 58-yard drive to Roger Ruzek's winning 38-yard field goal with 13 seconds remaining.

Eagles cornerback Otis Smith returned an interception 74 yards for 1 touchdown and set up another by blocking a punt. ■

Standings

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	13	3	0
N.Y. Jets	8	8	0
Miami	8	8	0
New England	6	10	0
Indianapolis	1	15	0
AFC Central			
Houston	11	5	0
Pittsburgh	7	9	0
Cleveland	6	10	0
Cincinnati	3	13	0
AFC West			
Denver	12	4	0
Kansas City	10	6	0
L.A. Raiders	9	7	0
Seattle	7	9	0
San Diego	4	12	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Washington	14	2	0
Dallas	11	5	0
Philadelphia	10	6	0
N.Y. Giants	8	8	0
Phoenix	4	12	0
NFC Central			
Detroit	12	4	0
Chicago	11	5	0
Minnesota	8	8	0
Green Bay	4	12	0
Tampa Bay	3	13	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	11	5	0
Atlanta	10	6	0
San Francisco	10	6	0
L.A. Rams	3	13	0

Scores

AFC
Cincinnati 29, New England 7
Denver 17, San Diego 14
Kansas City 27, L.A. Raiders 21
N.Y. Jets 23, Miami 20 (OT)
Pittsburgh 17, Cleveland 10

NFC
Dallas 31, Atlanta 27
Green Bay 27, Minnesota 7
New Orleans 27, Phoenix 3
Philadelphia 24, Washington 22
San Francisco 52, Chicago 14

Interconference
Detroit 17, Buffalo 14 (OT)
N.Y. Giants, 24, Houston 20
Seattle 23, L.A. Rams 9
Tampa Bay 17, Indianapolis 3

The Oilers could have clinched the first-round bye that went to Denver, but they fell behind the Giants 24-6 in the fourth quarter and rallied too late, losing 24-20.

Playing the way they did in 1990 when they were NFL champions, the Giants controlled the ball for nearly 38 minutes. Rodney Hampton ran for 140 yards and 1 touchdown, Phil Simms completed 15 of 17 passes (a team-record 88.3 per-

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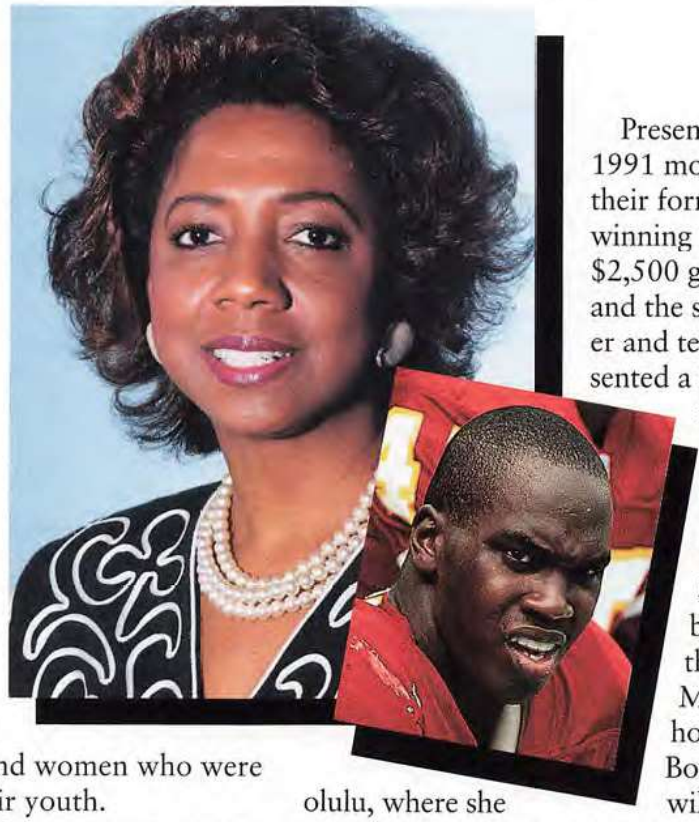
NFL Players Boast: My Teacher, My Hero



Many young people have heroes. Some are world leaders, scientists, parents; many are athletes.

Athletes, too, have heroes. Around the National Football League, teachers are among the favorite heroes of the players.

The NFL **Teacher of the Month Award** honors teachers who made a lasting impression on current NFL players.

Hundreds of players have nominated their former school teachers for the award—men and women who were mentors and friends during their youth.

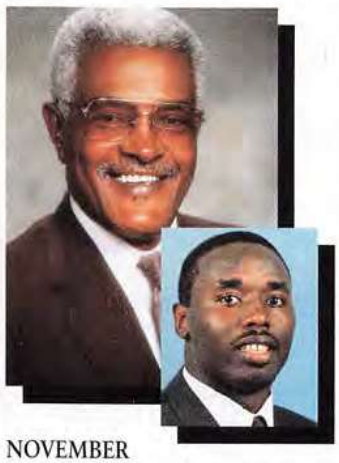
Each month of the NFL regular season, September through December, one of these educators is honored as the **NFL Teacher of the Month.**

Presented here are the four 1991 monthly winners and their former students. Each winning teacher received a $2,500 grant from the NFL, and the school where the player and teacher met was presented a $5,000 scholarship fund.

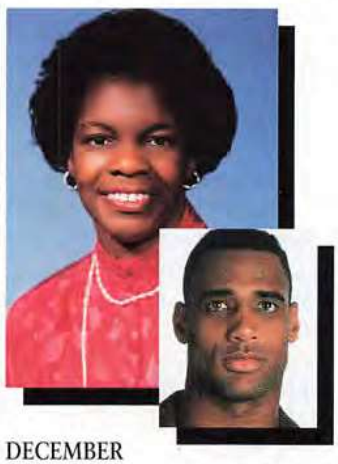
Also honored is Miriam Williams (left), the 1991 NFL Teacher of the Year. She was nominated by Derrick Thomas of the Kansas City Chiefs. Ms. Williams will be honored at the Pro Bowl in Honolulu, where she will be presented a $5,000 grant. A $10,000 scholarship fund will go to Palmetto (Florida) Middle School where the two met.

SEPTEMBER
Teacher: Don Ryan, Hempstead (N.Y.) High School
Player: Rob Moore, N.Y. Jets

OCTOBER
Teacher: Jane Manning, Johnson Elementary (Mansfield, La.)
Player: Floyd Turner, New Orleans



NOVEMBER
Teacher: George Mayo, Fort Myers (Fla.) High School
Player: Warren Williams, Pittsburgh



DECEMBER
Teacher: Jannie L. Phillips, Weaver High School (Hartford, Ct.)
Player: Eugene Robinson, Seattle

Congratulations to the Award Winners and teachers everywhere. The NFL salutes your commitment to educational excellence.

WEEK 13

DECEMBER 28

No Home-Field Advantage in NFC As Cowboys, Falcons Win on Road; Oilers, Chiefs Victorious in AFC

NFC Playoffs

Six years had gone by since the Dallas Cowboys had been in the playoffs—only four players were left from that 1985 team—and here they were facing the playoff-toughened Bears in cold, windy Chicago.

Were they worried?

Not a chance.

"Maybe we're just ignorant," Dallas wide receiver Michael Irvin said.

Not ignorant. Just confident. And good.

On the NFL's wild-card weekend, no team was more impressive than Dallas, which won its sixth game in a row, 17-13, sending the frustrated Bears to the playoff sidelines. The Cowboys led 10-3 at halftime, 17-6 after three quarters, and made it three surprising road victories in the last six weeks (over Washington, Philadelphia, and Chicago). It was Dallas's first playoff victory since 1982.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

NFL rushing leader Emmitt Smith of Dallas ran for 105 yards and a touchdown as the Cowboys beat the Bears. It was their sixth successive win.

The visiting team won the other NFC Wild Card Game, too, as Atlanta rallied to eliminate the Western Division-champion Saints 27-20 in New Orleans on three touchdown passes by Chris Miller, two of them to Michael Haynes.

The winning touchdown catch was mostly Haynes. He took a 5-yard pass 61 yards to decide the game with only 2:41 left.

"That was the fastest touchdown I've ever seen," Atlanta head coach Jerry Glanville said.

Like Jimmy Johnson's Cowboys, Glanville's Falcons were on a roll. It was their sixth win in the last seven games.

Cowboys 17, Bears 13

Looking at the offensive statistics, you would figure the Bears won. Chicago led in plays 82-48, had 11 more first downs, gained 84 more yards, and controlled the ball for more than 37 minutes.

But the Cowboys were good when they had to be on offense and tenacious on defense. They forced 3 turnovers (and lost none), sacked Jim Harbaugh 3 times (while suffering no sacks), and blocked a punt. In addition, they held the Bears to just one field goal on their first three drives inside the Dallas 10-yard line.

"The Cowboys did what it took to win," Bears running back Neal Anderson said. "We did what it took to lose."

Offensively, NFL rushing leader Emmitt Smith of Dallas rushed for 105 yards and a touchdown and became the first back in history to surpass 100 yards in a playoff game against the Bears—in Chicago's twenty-seventh postseason game.

Steve Beuerlein—5-0 as the starting quarterback and 6-0 since taking over for injured Troy Aikman halfway through the Washington game—threw a 3-yard touchdown pass to tight end Jay Novacek.

Rookie defensive end Tony Hill set up a field goal with a fumble recovery, and rookie linebacker Darrick Brownlow blocked a punt that was recovered by linebacker Ken Norton at the Bears' 10 to set up a touchdown.

Chicago's Jim Harbaugh passed for 218 yards, and rookie Darren Lewis ran for 65 on 9 carries—but the Bears got only two field goals from Kevin Butler and a 6-yard, fourth-quarter touchdown pass from Harbaugh to Tom Waddle. It wasn't enough.

"We're a very inexperienced playoff team, but we felt coming into the game that we should win," Beuerlein said.

Falcons 27, Saints 20

In a battle of infrequent playoff teams, Atlanta posted its first playoff victory since 1978, while the Saints remained winless in three appearances.

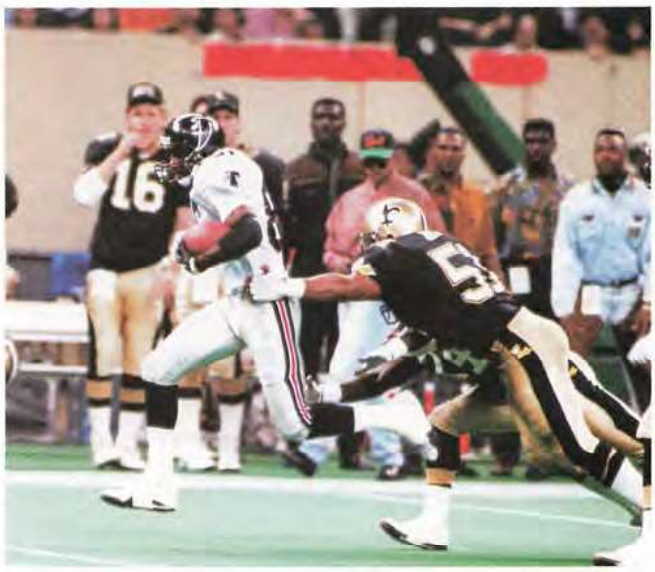
Besides his short pass that Michael Haynes took 61 yards for a touchdown, Chris Miller threw a 24-yard scoring strike to Andre Rison, one of 20 yards to Haynes, and totaled 291 yards through the air. Haynes caught 6 passes for 144 yards.

On his winning catch, Haynes eluded cornerback Milton Mack and linebacker Sam Mills and raced down the right sideline with safety Vencie Glenn in futile pursuit.

The Saints held the lead much of the game, jumping ahead 10-0 in the second quarter, leading 13-10 at halftime, and taking a brief 20-17 lead in the fourth quarter. Bobby Hebert passed for 273 yards, including a 26-yard scoring pass to Floyd Turner.

But Atlanta scored the game's last 10 points.

"This leaves a bitter taste in my mouth," said Saints running back Dalton Hilliard, whose 1-yard touchdown run had given New Orleans a short-lived 20-17 lead. "We had the opportunity to make this year very special."



Bob Rosato

Atlanta's Michael Haynes escaped linebacker Sam Mills (51) and cornerback Milton Mack and went 61 yards for the winning touchdown as the Falcons rallied to beat the Saints 27-20.

Al Messerschmidt

Houston safety Bubba McDowell (25) intercepted 2 passes in the second half to help the Oilers hold off the scrappy Jets 17-10 in the Astrodome.

AFC Playoffs

Things definitely were looking up in Houston.

"We're going into Mile High Stadium a mile high," Oilers linebacker Lamar Lathon said of his team's next playoff game with Denver. "Something great is getting ready to happen to this team."

What happened in the wild-card game was a hard-fought 17-10 win over the New York Jets, who carried the poorest record (8-8) into the playoffs, but didn't go down easily.

The Oilers' Warren Moon threw 2 touchdown passes to Ernest Givins, while Houston's defense stopped three critical New York drives in the second half to preserve the victory.

Defense was very much in style in Kansas City, too, where Chiefs defenders intercepted rookie quarterback Todd Marinovich 4 times, forced a total of 6 turnovers, and set up all of Kansas City's points in a 10-6 conquest of the visiting Raiders.

Six days earlier, the Chiefs had won the home-field advantage for the wild-card game with a 27-21 victory in Los Angeles. On that day, Marinovich passed for 3 touchdowns in place of injured Jay Schroeder.

"Everyone was talking about how he just mangled our defensive secondary," said Kansas City safety Deron Cherry, who had 2 interceptions in the wild-card game. "That was a motivating factor in this game, too."

Oilers 17, Jets 10

In Houston, the Oilers drove 80 and 76 yards to score on Moon's 5- and 20-yard touchdown passes to Givins for a 14-10 halftime lead.

However, the Jets had 3 of their 4 sacks in the second half, and Houston scored only on Al Del Greco's 53-yard field goal after intermission.

But, with their offense struggling, the Oilers' defense played brilliantly, despite the loss of both tackles—Pro Bowl selection Ray Childress (before the game) and Doug Smith (in the first half)—with injuries.

Safety Bubba McDowell intercepted 2 passes in the second half, stopping a Jets drive at the Houston 3 in the third quarter with the first and ending the game with the second.

Safety Bo Orlando, whose first-half interception led to a touchdown, teamed with linebacker Al Smith and tackle Jeff Alm to stop Freeman McNeil for no gain on fourth-and-1 at the Houston 3 in the fourth quarter.

"Bo and I made a vow to each other last week that we were going to control this game," McDowell said.

The Oilers also turned the Jets away on downs at their 22 in the final period.

New York scored all of its points in the second quarter on Ken O'Brien's 10-yard pass to Al Toon and Raul Allegre's 33-yard field goal.

"We're looking forward to going even further," O'Brien said, looking ahead to next year. "A lot of people didn't think we could go this far."

Chiefs 10, Raiders 6

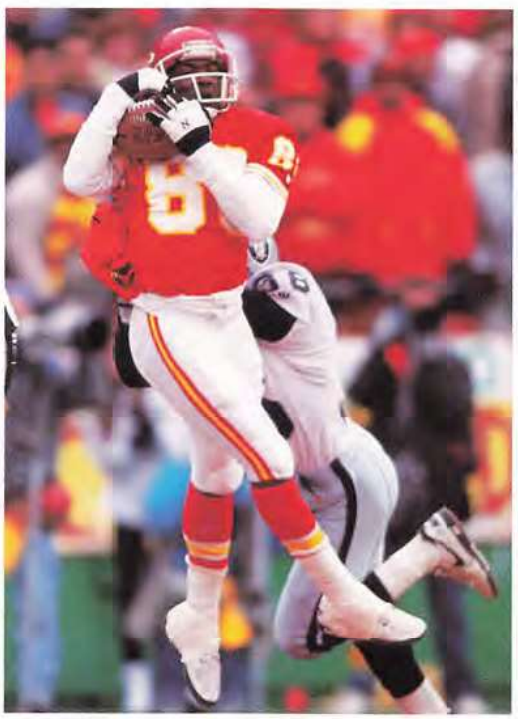
Remarkably, this was Kansas City's first postseason win since Super Bowl IV.

It also was the Chiefs' fifth victory in a row over their division rivals, and they accomplished it without Pro Bowl linebacker Derrick Thomas, who left in the second quarter with an accelerated heartbeat (he was expected to play the next week).

But, filling in for Thomas, Lonnie Marts forced a fumble that led to a field goal and intercepted a pass that ended the Raiders' final threat with 2:14 left.

In the secondary, Cherry, a self-professed game film fanatic, noticed before the game that Marinovich, the Raiders' rookie quarterback, would throw wherever he was looking. So the coaching staff moved the veteran safety closer to the line of scrimmage, where he could read the quarterback's eyes and break on the ball.

Kansas City's Fred Jones scored on an 11-yard pass as the Chiefs beat the Raiders. Jones landed out of bounds, but it was ruled he was forced out.



Scott Cunningham

Doing just that, Cherry returned interceptions 17 and 29 yards in the first half. His 29-yard runback to the Raiders' 11 set up the game's only touchdown—Steve DeBerg's 11-yard pass to Fred Jones.

Jones actually landed out of the end zone when he caught the ball, but the officials ruled he was pushed out in mid-air by cornerback Terry McDaniel.

Despite the low score, both teams moved the ball well on the ground. Kansas City's Barry Word ran for 130 yards. L.A. rookie Nick Bell pounded out 107. Jeff Jaeger kicked two field goals for the only Raiders' points.

"I didn't want to take that uniform off," Marinovich said after the game. "I hate losing. I didn't want the season to end so quickly." ■

WEEK 19

JANUARY 4

Broncos' Elway Pulls Another Rabbit Out of the Hat; Bills, Redskins, Surprising Lions All Win Easily

AFC Playoffs

Long after the game, Denver wide receiver Michael Young still was talking about quarterback John Elway.

"The guy is just beyond belief," Young said. "No matter what the situation, when John gets that look in his eyes, we know we have a chance."

When Elway got "that look in his eyes," the Broncos were pinned on their 2-yard line, trailing Houston 24-23 with only 2:07—and no time outs—left in their divisional playoff game.

For the Denver quarterback, however, it was just another day at the office. For the nineteenth time in his career, he rallied the Broncos to a victory in the fourth quarter or overtime, driving his team 87 yards to set up David Treadwell's winning 28-yard field goal with 16 seconds remaining. At 26-24, it was the first time Denver had led all afternoon.

In winning their fifth successive game, the Broncos advanced to the AFC Championship Game for the fourth time in six years.

It was much easier for their next opponent, Buffalo, which took a 24-0 lead on Kansas City and breezed to a 37-14 victory behind 3 touchdown passes by Jim Kelly, 100 rushing yards by Thurman Thomas, and 3 field goals by Scott Norwood.

Thus, the Bills avenged their worst loss of the season, Kansas City's 33-6 rout in early October. In that game, the Chiefs rushed for 247 yards. In the playoff game, however, they were held to 77 on the ground and only 213 total yards.

"We just stuffed them," Buffalo nose tackle Jeff Wright said.

Broncos 26, Oilers 24

In the 1986 AFC title game, Elway led the Broncos 98 yards to a last-minute touchdown that tied Cleveland and enabled Denver to win 23-20 in overtime. His heroics that day became known as The Drive.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

On this last-minute, fourth-down scramble, Denver's John Elway passed to Vance Johnson for the 44-yard gain that set up David Treadwell's winning field goal as the Broncos rallied to beat Houston 26-24.

Five years later against Houston, when Elway got the ball on the 2-yard line again—after Greg Montgomery's punt died there—he needed just a field goal, but had almost 3½ fewer minutes to work with, and no time outs (Denver had all three five years earlier). To beat Houston, the 31-year-old quarterback made three big plays—his 22-yard pass to Michael Young on the drive's first play and two nervy fourth-down efforts.

On fourth-and-6, with 1:28 left, Elway scrambled 7 yards to his left for a first down. On fourth-and-10 at his own 35, with 59 seconds remaining, he scrambled left again and lobbed a pass to Vance Johnson that Johnson carried to the Houston 21.

"If John's not running for a first down, he's going to find someone," Johnson said later. "He's the greatest at that."

Ironically, it had been Houston's Warren Moon who had been finding someone all day.

Moon opened the game with a 49-yard pass to Haywood Jeffires and went on to pass for 325 yards and 3 touchdowns, including one of 15 yards to Jeffires and 9- and 6-yard scoring throws to Drew Hill and Curtis Duncan, respectively. The Oilers had first-half leads of 14-0 and 21-6 and still led 21-16 after three quarters.

Meanwhile, Elway kept fighting back, driving his team 65, 88, and 80 yards for touchdowns and 49 for a field goal. He threw a 10-yard touchdown pass to Johnson, and rookie Greg Lewis scored on a pair of 1-yard runs. Only a missed extra point by Treadwell after the first score—when holder Gary Kubiak dropped the snap—left Denver behind by a point.

Kubiak was a hero later, however. On the winning kick, he scooped up a bad snap and placed it down in time.

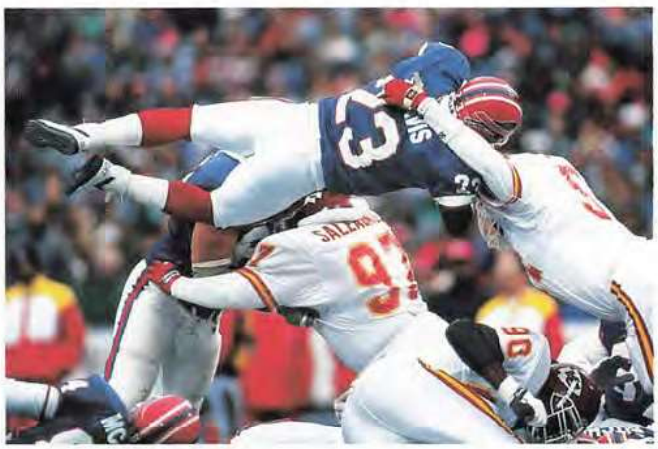
Moon, 35, who feels time is running out on his chance to reach the Super Bowl, was depressed.

"I wish I could have played defensive back or linebacker or something like that [on the last drive]," he said. "It was very tough watching."

Bills 37, Chiefs 14

It was tough for Kansas City to watch Kelly all afternoon, too, as the Bills' quarterback directed an offense that rolled up 448 yards and 29 first downs and controlled the ball for 82 plays.

In the first half, Kelly threw 25- and 53-yard touchdown passes to Andre Reed, and, in the third quarter, he flipped one 10



Bob Rosato

Buffalo's Kenneth Davis not only runs, but he can fly, too. He got a first down on this dive as the Bills rolled past the Chiefs 37-14 to reach the AFC Championship Game for the second year in a row.

yards to James Lofton.

"It was just a matter of getting the time to throw," Kelly said. "That's why the game balls went to the offensive line."

The Bills' defense had a big day, too, intercepting 4 passes off backup Chiefs quarterback Mark Vlasic, 2 by cornerback Kirby Jackson. Vlasic had replaced Steve DeBerg in the second quarter after DeBerg injured the thumb on his passing hand. Interceptions set up 17 of Buffalo's final 20 points.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

Detroit's Erik Kramer riddled the Dallas secondary, completing 29 of 38 passes, as the Lions romped 38-6 for their seventh successive victory.

With 1:05 remaining in the first half, the Chiefs had a great opportunity to change the momentum of the game, but failed. Buffalo was leading 14-0 when Kansas City cornerback Kevin Ross dropped an interception at his 35 with a clear field in front of him. Instead of a 65-yard Chiefs' touchdown, the series ended with a Buffalo field goal and 17-0 halftime lead.

By winning, the Bills improved their AFC-best record to 14-3.

"Clearly it's a damn fine Buffalo football team," Chiefs head coach Marty Schottenheimer said. "But it's a real disappointment for our entire organization to come in here and not perform any better than we did."

NFC Playoffs

Detroit and Dallas—the two hottest teams in the playoffs—met in Pontiac in what figured to be a close, heart-stopping game.

It may have been heart-stopping for Dallas, but it wasn't close. The Lions, behind the remarkable passing of Erik Kramer and the swarming play of their defense, won 38-6 to advance to their first championship game since winning the NFL title in 1957. It was Detroit's seventh consecutive victory, while Dallas's winning streak stopped at six.

"Their linebackers attacked the line of scrimmage, so we thought we could get behind them," Lions head coach Wayne Fontes said. "We took what they gave us."

While the Cowboys crowded the line with six players to stop Detroit running back Barry Sanders, Kramer picked apart their secondary. The Lions' quarterback completed 29 of 38 passes for 341 yards and 3 touchdowns.

In Washington, the Redskins did it on the ground, splashing through a steady rainstorm to turn back Atlanta, which had won six of its last seven games, 24-7. Rookie Ricky Ervins ran for 104 yards and a touchdown, Earnest Byner ran for 57 more, and Gerald Riggs scored on 2 short runs. Washington stretched its record to 15-2, best in the NFL.

"It was wet and sloshy out there, and we kept the game plan really simple," Redskins guard Mark Schlereth said. "We wanted to control the ball and control the clock.

"You'd throw a block and fall, and then come up with a bellyful of water. It was nice."

Lions 38, Cowboys 6

In the season's eighth game, coincidentally against Dallas, Kramer replaced starting quarterback Rodney Peete, who was lost for the season with an Achilles tendon injury.

Kramer immediately threw 2 touchdown passes to lead the Lions to a 34-10 victory over the Cowboys. But he was much sharper in the rematch. On Detroit's first series, he completed 4 of 5 attempts, including a 31-yard touchdown pass to Willie Green, and he never cooled off.

In the third quarter, with the Lions leading 17-6, the 27-year-old quarterback threw 2 touchdown passes in 65 seconds to break the game open.

First, he passed 9 yards to Green at the end of an 80-yard drive. After the kickoff, Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman, who returned from a knee injury to relieve Steve Beuerlein in the second quarter, fumbled the snap, and linebacker Victor Jones recovered at the Cowboys' 27. Three plays later, Kramer lobbed a 7-yard touchdown pass to rookie Herman Moore. At 31-6, the game was over.

"We put the ball in Kramer's hands to see if he could beat us," Dallas safety Bill Bates said. "And, by golly, he did it."

The Lions also scored on cornerback Melvin Jenkins's 41-yard interception return off Beuerlein (for a 14-3 lead) and Sanders's remarkable 47-yard run.

On his big run, Sanders was hit by cornerback Robert Williams, bounced backwards, popped out of a swarm of four other Cowboys, ran behind tackle Tony Casillas, faked out linebacker Ken Norton, and was gone.

After running 17 yards for the game's first touchdown, Washington's Ricky Ervins (32) celebrated his team's 7-0, second-quarter lead. The Redskins went on to beat Atlanta 24-7 in a steady downpour.

Scott Cunningham

Redskins 24, Falcons 7

Despite the steady rain and winds that gusted up to 30 miles per hour, the Redskins had only 1 turnover. Atlanta had 6, including 4 interceptions of passes by Chris Miller.

"I wouldn't let my kids play in that stuff," Miller said of the mud. "That's the worst field I ever played on. I was slipping and sliding all over the place. With us counting on throwing the ball so much, it was really tough to get things going."

It wasn't difficult for the balanced Redskins, who outgained Atlanta 332-193, had 10 more first downs, 28 more plays, and controlled the ball for more than 36 minutes.

Ervins scored on a 17-yard run, Riggs scored on 2- and 1-yard runs, and the defense and special teams set up 17 points.

Fumble recoveries by defensive tackle James Geathers and linebacker Wilber Marshall led to 2 touchdowns, and Brian Mitchell set up a field goal with a 26-yard punt return. Washington also sacked Miller 4 times.

Tracy Johnson scored Atlanta's only touchdown, culminating an 80-yard drive with a 1-yard run in the final minute of the first half.

"I don't think it was possible for them to really be confident before playing us," Washington defensive end Charles Mann said, "especially after we beat them 56-17 [in early November]. The odds were stacked our way." ■

WEEK 20

JANUARY 12

AFC Title Game: Bills Avoid Upset Despite Broncos' Great Defensive Effort; Redskins Overpower Lions in NFC

Bills 10, Broncos 7

The 1991 AFC Championship Game was supposed to be a walk in the park for the Buffalo Bills. Well, it was. But, on this particular stroll in the park—on a sunny, surprisingly mild day at Rich Stadium—the Bills got lost in the shrubs, then got mugged by the Denver Broncos before finally making their way to safety.

Yes, Buffalo successfully defended its AFC title and advanced to Super Bowl XXVI, but that's where the rehearsed script ended. The Bills' no-huddle attack had been close to unstoppable for most of the season, but it never got untracked against Denver. Buffalo's offense finished with 213 total yards, 104 passing yards, 12 first downs, and no touchdowns. It also finished in the winner's circle, which, in the big picture, was the only thing that counted.

Bob Rosato

Linebacker Carlton Bailey heads toward the end zone with a deflected interception off quarterback John Elway for the Bills' only touchdown.

But what a showing by the Broncos' underrated defense. If not for 3 missed field goals by David Treadwell and a disastrous screen pass by John Elway, Denver most likely would have pulled off a shocking upset and set off for Minneapolis to try again for that elusive Super Bowl victory.

Broncos linebacker Simon Fletcher set the tone early, hammering quarterback Jim Kelly for a sack on the Bills' first possession. It was a good indication of things to come. Throughout the first half, Denver clogged up the line of scrimmage, took away the running game, and kept Kelly out of sync. Fletcher and linebacker Michael Brooks blitzed often and effectively, and, when Kelly was able to unload the ball in the direction of his talented wide receivers, Denver safeties Steve Atwater and Dennis Smith usually were there to disrupt the play. Atwater, in particular, spent the afternoon rattling the Bills' cage. Andre Reed and James Lofton combined for only 3 catches and 30 yards in the game.

Meanwhile, most of the the Broncos' drives began with good field position—and ended in frustration. Denver entered Buffalo territory all six times it had the ball in the first half, but Treadwell missed from 47, 42, and 37 yards, and the halftime score was 0-0. The Broncos reached the Bills' 11-yard line (before a sack by Bruce Smith) and 20-yard line on consecutive possessions, but Treadwell hit the right upright on both occasions.

"I couldn't have hit the uprights twice in a row if I tried," Treadwell said.

Not that Denver stalled without help. The Buffalo defense was as strong as its offense was sluggish. Linebacker Cornelius Bennett, at the height of his all-pro talents, constantly found his way into the Broncos' backfield, either to pressure Elway or to trap swift running back Gaston Green for a loss. Linebacker Darryl Talley and safety Leonard Smith also covered large portions of the field.

On Denver's first possession of the second half, Elway was forced from the pocket, a common occurrence in the game. Only this time, Buffalo end Leon Seals fell on Elway's legs and the quarterback suffered a deep thigh bruise. He remained in the game, but his reduced mobility proved to be a great disadvantage. Elway completed 10 of 15 passes for 113 yards in the first half, keeping the Bills off-balance; in the second half, he was 1 of 6 for 8 yards. He also made the biggest mistake of the game.

Nine minutes into the third quarter, cornerback Tyrone Braxton intercepted Kelly deep in Denver territory. Two plays later, Elway attempted a middle screen pass to Steve Sewell—a play that had broken for 21 yards in the first half—but Buffalo nose tackle Jeff Wright and linebacker Carlton Bailey read it. Wright tipped the ball to Bailey, who slipped Elway's tackle and scored the game's first touchdown.

"When Carlton made the interception," Kelly said, "the whole offense was saying, 'Please get into the end zone.'"

"I know that it would have been very difficult for me to come back in here come Monday morning after allowing the quarterback to tackle me," said Bailey, nicknamed "Mongo" by his teammates for his likeness to the lumbering brute played by Alex Karras in *Blazing Saddles*. "I'll tell you this: I have no future playing running back."

By the early stages of the fourth quarter, Elway's leg had stiffened so much that head coach Dan Reeves was forced to send backup quarterback Gary Kubiak into the game. Shortly thereafter, the Bills' Scott Norwood kicked a 44-yard field goal to make it 10-0.

Kubiak is a nine-year veteran who has played a big role for Denver in the past, but he had attempted only 5 passes in 1991. This might go into the books as his finest NFL game. It also prob-

Linebacker Cornelius Bennett finishes off a tackle of Denver running back Gaston Green.

Bob Rosato

ably was his last—earlier, he had announced his intention to retire. Kubiak completed 11 of 12 passes for 136 yards—outgaining both Elway (121) and Kelly (117)—and scored the Broncos' only touchdown on a 3-yard quarterback draw with 1:43 left, capping an 85-yard drive that cut the deficit to 10-7.

The Broncos still needed a small miracle, and they appeared to get it when Atwater recovered Treadwell's ensuing onside kick. But kismet struck again when Sewell fumbled after catching a pass on the next play. Cornerback Kirby Jackson recovered at the Buffalo 44, and the Bills breathed a collective sigh of relief.

"We did everything we could," Denver head coach Dan Reeves said. "Our defense held them to three points. It's a shame a turnover changed the game."

After nearly fainting during the postgame press conference, Elway limped out of the room, supported under each arm by a Broncos official. The Bills, celebrating for the moment, soon would begin preparing for a showdown with the powerful Washington Redskins.

Redskins defensive end Charles Mann (71) harasses Lions quarterback Erik Kramer as guard Scott Conover (76) tries to keep him away.

Al Messerschmidt

Redskins 41, Lions 10

With two minutes left in the game, Washington wide receiver Gary Clark and center Jeff Bostic tiptoed up behind coach Joe Gibbs and showered him with ice water and Gatorade.

Gibbs, who always looks grimly serious during football games, broke into a big grin.

He had reason to smile. His Washington Redskins were on their way to an overwhelming 41-10 victory over Detroit in the NFC Championship Game, a victory that sent them to Super Bowl XXVI in Minneapolis with the NFL's best record (16-2).

It is Gibbs's fourth Super Bowl appearance, and the destruction of Detroit improved his career postseason record to a dazzling 14-4.

"Obviously, it's been a great ride for me as a coach this year," a happy Gibbs said later. "The biggest factor about this team has been its consistency. We've been very focused all season, and we've been able to get a great mix of veterans and young guys from Plan B and the draft to give us great chemistry.

"And great chemistry makes great teams."

Make no mistake about it: Washington was a great team this season. After posting a 14-2 regular-season record, the Redskins outscored Atlanta and Detroit 65-17 in two playoff games.

Although the Lions had lost 45-0 to Washington in the season opener and never had beaten the Redskins in Washington (they were 0-16 after the NFC title game), they came into the game on an emotional high of their own.

As NFC Central Division champions, the Lions had won seven consecutive games and a club-record 13 games overall, including a playoff victory over Dallas. They began their seven-game winning streak on the tragic day when guard Mike Utley was paralyzed from the chest down after suffering an injury against the Rams.

Raleigh McKenzie (63) celebrates as running back Gerald Riggs sprawls in the end zone with Washington's second touchdown in a 41-10 rout of Detroit.

Utley had given his teammates the thumbs-up sign as he was carried off the field—and that inspiring gesture had become the team's symbol of unity.

But the Redskins jumped on Detroit for a quick 10-0 lead, held a 17-10 halftime edge, and won the second half 24-0.

"Of all the teams we played this year, Washington is the best team by far," Detroit head coach Wayne Fontes said. "But I will not go back to Detroit with my head down. What we have to do is go back and get better next year. I'm very proud of this football team."

In overpowering the Lions, the Redskins forced 3 turnovers that led directly to 17 points and sacked Erik Kramer and Andre Ware a total of 5 times, 3 by linebacker Wilber Marshall.

Meanwhile, Washington did not commit a turnover, while Mark Rypien, who threw 45- and 21-yard touchdown passes to Clark and Art Monk, never was sacked.

Striking quickly on both offense and defense, the opportunistic Redskins led 7-0 just 66 seconds into the game and 10-0 with only 4:02 gone.

On the game's first play, Washington defensive end Charles Mann sacked Kramer and forced a fumble that fellow end Fred Stokes recovered at the Detroit 11. On second down, Gerald Riggs scored on the first of his two short touchdown runs, this one from the 2.

On the very next series, Kramer was intercepted by linebacker Kurt Gouveia, who returned the pass 38 yards to the Detroit 10, and three plays later, Chip Lohmiller kicked a 20-yard field goal, the first of his two three-pointers.

"Our fast start was a big boost for the team and for the defense," Gouveia said. "I mean, that got the adrenalin going. We were hyped."

Detroit fought back, slicing the lead to 10-7 in the second quarter on Kramer's 18-yard touchdown pass to Willie Green.

After Riggs scored on a 3-yard, fourth-down run for a 17-7 lead, Detroit closed to 17-10 at halftime on Eddie Murray's 30-yard field goal with 37 seconds left.

But Washington was awesome in the second half. Leading 20-10, the Redskins halted Detroit's bid when defensive tackle James Geathers blocked Murray's 44-yard field-goal attempt in the third quarter.

"After that, I think the wind went out of their sails," Geathers said.

Rypien immediately drove his team 73 yards to score on a perfectly thrown 45-yard pass to Clark for a 27-10 lead, and on their next series, the Redskins scored again on Rypien's 21-yard strike to Monk early in the fourth quarter.

At 34-10, it was over, although cornerback Darrell Green returned an interception 32 yards for a late touchdown. ■

Al Messerschmidt

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1991 STATISTICS

NFL INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

AFC PASSING LEADERS

	Att	Comp	Pct Comp	Yds	Avg Gain	TD	Pct TD	Long	Int	Pct Int	Rating Points
Jim Kelly, Buffalo	474	304	64.1	3,844	8.11	33	7.0	t77	17	3.6	97.6
Bernie Kosar, Cleveland	494	307	62.1	3,487	7.06	18	3.6	t71	9	1.8	87.8
Dan Marino, Miami	549	318	57.9	3,970	7.23	25	4.6	54	13	2.4	85.8
Dave Krieg, Seattle	285	187	65.6	2,080	7.30	11	3.9	60	12	4.2	82.5
Warren Moon, Houston	655	404	61.7	4,690	7.16	23	3.5	t61	21	3.2	81.7
Steve DeBerg, Kansas City	434	256	59.0	2,965	6.83	17	3.9	63	14	3.2	79.3
Neil O'Donnell, Pittsburgh	286	156	54.5	1,963	6.86	11	3.8	t89	7	2.4	78.8
Ken O'Brien, N.Y. Jets	489	287	58.7	3,300	6.75	10	2.0	53	11	2.2	76.6
John Elway, Denver	451	242	53.7	3,253	7.21	13	2.9	71	12	2.7	75.4
Jeff George, Indianapolis	485	292	60.2	2,910	6.00	10	2.1	t49	12	2.5	73.8

NFC PASSING LEADERS

	Att	Comp	Pct Comp	Yds	Avg Gain	TD	Pct TD	Long	Int	Pct Int	Rating Points
Steve Young, San Francisco	279	180	64.5	2,517	9.02	17	6.1	t97	8	2.9	101.8
Mark Rypien, Washington	421	249	59.1	3,564	8.47	28	6.7	t82	11	2.6	97.9
Steve Bono, San Francisco	237	141	59.5	1,617	6.82	11	4.6	78	4	1.7	88.5
Troy Aikman, Dallas	363	237	65.3	2,754	7.59	11	3.0	61	10	2.8	86.7
Jeff Hostetler, N.Y. Giants	285	179	62.8	2,032	7.13	5	1.8	55	4	1.4	84.1
Rich Gannon, Minnesota	354	211	59.6	2,166	6.12	12	3.4	50	6	1.7	81.5
Chris Miller, Atlanta	413	220	53.3	3,103	7.51	26	6.3	t80	18	4.4	80.6
Jim McMahon, Philadelphia	311	187	60.1	2,239	7.20	12	3.9	t75	11	3.5	80.3
Steve Walsh, New Orleans	255	141	55.3	1,638	6.42	11	4.3	41	6	2.4	79.5
Bobby Hebert, New Orleans	248	149	60.1	1,676	6.76	9	3.6	t65	8	3.2	79.0

AFC LEADING RUSHERS

	Att	Yards	Avg	Long	TD
Thurman Thomas, Buffalo	288	1,407	4.9	33	7
Gaston Green, Denver	261	1,037	4.0	t63	4
Christian Okoye, Kansas City	225	1,031	4.6	48	9
Leonard Russell, New England	266	959	3.6	24	4
Mark Higgs, Miami	231	905	3.9	24	4
Marion Butts San Diego	193	834	4.3	44	6
Rod Bernstine, San Diego	159	766	4.8	t63	8
John L. Williams, Seattle	188	741	3.9	42	4
Harold Green, Cincinnati	158	731	4.6	t75	2
Blair Thomas, N.Y. Jets	189	728	3.9	25	3

NFC LEADING RUSHERS

	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TD
Emmitt Smith, Dallas	365	1,563	4.3	t75	12
Barry Sanders, Detroit	342	1,548	4.5	t69	16
Rodney Hampton, N.Y. Giants	256	1,059	4.1	44	10
Earnest Byner, Washington	274	1,048	3.8	32	5
Herschel Walker, Minnesota	198	825	4.2	t71	10
Reggie Cobb, Tampa Bay	196	752	3.8	t59	7
Neal Anderson, Chicago	210	747	3.6	t42	6
Robert Delpino, L.A. Rams	214	688	3.2	36	9
Ricky Ervins, Washington	145	680	4.7	t65	3
Johnny Johnson, Phoenix	196	666	3.4	21	4

AFC LEADING SCORERS, TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	Rush	Rec	Ret	Pts
Mark Clayton, Miami	12	0	12	0	72
Thurman Thomas, Buffalo	12	7	5	0	72
Brad Baxter, N.Y. Jets	11	11	0	0	66
Leroy Hoard, Cleveland	11	2	9	0	66
Kevin Mack, Cleveland	10	8	2	0	60
Allen Pinkett, Houston	10	9	1	0	60
Andre Reed, Buffalo	10	0	10	0	60
Christian Okoye, Kansas City	9	9	0	0	54
Rod Bernstine, San Diego	8	8	0	0	48
James Lofton, Buffalo	8	0	8	0	48

NFC LEADING SCORERS, TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	Rush	Rec	Ret	Pts
Barry Sanders, Detroit	17	16	1	0	102
Jerry Rice, San Francisco	14	0	14	0	84
Emmitt Smith, Dallas	13	12	1	0	78
Andre Rison, Atlanta	12	0	12	0	72
Michael Haynes, Atlanta	11	0	11	0	66
Gerald Riggs, Washington	11	11	0	0	66
Vince Workman, Green Bay	11	7	4	0	66
Gary Clark, Washington	10	0	10	0	60
Robert Delpino, L.A. Rams	10	9	1	0	60
Rodney Hampton, N.Y. Giants	10	10	0	0	60
Herschel Walker, Minnesota	10	10	0	0	60

AFC LEADING SCORERS, KICKING

	PAT	FG	Long	Pts
Pete Stoyanovich, Miami	28/29	31/37	53	121
Jeff Jaeger, L.A. Raiders	29/30	29/34	53	116
David Treadwell, Denver	31/32	27/36	47	112
Nick Lowery, K.C.	35/35	25/30	48	110
Scott Norwood, Buffalo	56/58	18/29	52	110
Pat Leahy, N.Y. Jets	30/30	26/37	40	108
John Kasay, Seattle	27/28	25/31	54	102
Gary Anderson, Pittsburgh	31/31	23/33	54	100
Jim Breech, Cincinnati	27/27	23/29	50	96
John Carney, San Diego	31/31	19/29	54	88

NFC LEADING SCORERS, KICKING

	PAT	FG	Long	Pts
Chip Lohmiller, Washington	56/56	31/43	53	149
Ken Willis, Dallas	37/37	27/39	54	118
Morten Andersen, New Orleans	38/38	25/32	60	113
Roger Ruzek, Philadelphia	27/29	28/33	51	111
Eddie Murray, Detroit	40/40	19/28	50	97
Norm Johnson, Atlanta	38/39	19/23	50	95
Mike Cofer, San Francisco	49/50	14/28	50	91
Matt Bahr, N.Y. Giants	24/25	22/29	54	90
Kevin Butler, Chicago	32/34	19/29	50	89

AFC LEADING RECEIVERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg	Long	TD
Haywood Jeffires, Houston	100	1,181	11.8	44	7
Drew Hill, Houston	90	1,109	12.3	t61	4
Marv Cook, New England	82	808	9.9	49	3
Andre Reed, Buffalo	81	1,113	13.7	55	10
Al Toon, N.Y. Jets	74	963	13.0	32	0
Bill Brooks, Indianapolis	72	888	12.3	46	4
Mark Duper, Miami	70	1,085	15.5	t43	5
Mark Clayton, Miami	70	1,053	15.0	t43	12
Brian Blades, Seattle	70	1,003	14.3	52	2
Ernest Givins, Houston	70	996	14.2	49	5
Rob Moore, N.Y. Jets	70	987	14.1	53	5
Irving Fryar, New England	68	1,014	14.9	t56	3

NFC LEADING RECEIVERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg	Long	TD
Michael Irvin, Dallas	93	1,523	16.4	t66	8
Andre Rison, Atlanta	81	976	12.0	t39	12
Jerry Rice, San Francisco	80	1,206	15.1	t73	14
Cris Carter, Minnesota	72	962	13.4	50	5
Art Monk, Washington	71	1,049	14.8	t64	8
Gary Clark, Washington	70	1,340	19.1	t82	10
Sterling Sharpe, Green Bay	69	961	13.9	t58	4
Eric Martin, New Orleans	66	803	12.2	30	4
Henry Ellard, L.A. Rams	64	1,052	16.4	38	3
John Taylor, San Francisco	64	1,011	15.8	t97	9
Floyd Turner, New Orleans	64	927	14.5	t65	8
Fred Barnett, Philadelphia	62	948	15.3	t75	4

AFC LEADING PUNTERS

	No.	Yards	Long	Avg.
Reggie Roby, Miami	54	2,466	64	45.7
Jeff Gossett, L.A. Raiders	67	2,961	61	44.2
Greg Montgomery, Houston	48	2,105	60	43.9
Lee Johnson, Cincinnati	64	2,795	62	43.7
Rick Tuten, Seattle	49	2,106	60	43.0
Rohn Stark, Indianapolis	82	3,492	65	42.6
Brian Hansen, Cleveland	80	3,397	65	42.5
Mike Horan, Denver	72	3,012	71	41.8
Dan Stryzinski, Pittsburgh	74	2,996	63	40.5
Bryan Barker, Kansas City	57	2,303	57	40.4

NFC LEADING PUNTERS

	No.	Yards	Long	Avg.
Harry Newsome, Minnesota	68	3,095	65	45.5
Rich Camarillo, Phoenix	76	3,445	60	45.3
Tom Barnhardt, New Orleans	86	3,743	61	43.5
Sean Landeta, N.Y Giants	64	2,768	61	43.3
Scott Fulhage, Atlanta	81	3,470	60	42.8
Mike Saxon, Dallas	57	2,426	64	42.6
Jeff Feagles, Philadelphia	87	3,640	77	41.8
Jim Arnold, Detroit	75	3,092	63	41.2
Maury Buford, Chicago	69	2,814	64	40.8
Paul McJulien, Green Bay	86	3,473	62	40.4

AFC LEADING PUNT RETURNERS

	No	Yards	Avg	Long	TD
Rod Woodson, Pittsburgh	28	320	11.4	40	0
Tim Brown, L.A. Raiders	29	330	11.4	t75	1
Kitrick Taylor, San Diego	28	269	9.6	48	0
Chris Warren, Seattle	32	298	9.3	t59	1
Scott Miller, Miami	28	248	8.9	32	0
Jerome Henderson, New England	27	201	7.4	39	0
Vance Johnson, Denver	24	174	7.3	20	0
Terance Mathis, N.Y. Jets	23	157	6.8	25	0
Troy Stradford, Kansas City	22	150	6.8	18	0
Clarence Verdin, Indianapolis	25	165	6.6	22	0

NFC LEADING PUNT RETURNERS

	No	Yards	Avg	Long	TD
Mel Gray, Detroit	25	385	15.4	t78	1
Brian Mitchell, Washington	45	600	13.3	t69	2
Kelvin Martin, Dallas	21	244	11.6	t85	1
David Meggett, N.Y. Giants	28	287	10.3	t70	1
Willie Drewrey, Tampa Bay	38	360	9.5	33	0
Vai Sikahema, Green Bay	26	239	9.2	62	0
Vernon Turner, L.A. Rams	23	201	8.7	29	0
John Taylor, San Francisco	31	267	8.6	24	0
Vince Buck, New Orleans	31	260	8.4	52	0
Deion Sanders, Atlanta	21	170	8.1	23	0

AFC LEADING KICKOFF RETURNERS

	No	Yards	Avg	Long	TD
Nate Lewis, San Diego	23	578	25.1	t95	1
Sammy Martin, New England-Ind	20	483	24.2	38	0
Chris Warren, Seattle	35	792	22.6	55	0
Harvey Williams, Kansas City	24	524	21.8	76	0
Jon Vaughn, New England	34	717	21.1	t99	1
Terance Mathis, N.Y. Jets	29	599	20.7	50	0
Al Edwards, Buffalo	31	623	20.1	t91	1
Rod Woodson, Pittsburgh	44	880	20.0	47	0
Donnie Elder, San Diego	27	535	19.8	42	0
Allen Pinkett, Houston	26	508	19.5	41	0

NFC LEADING KICKOFF RETURNERS

	No	Yards	Avg	Long	TD
Mel Gray, Detroit	36	929	25.8	71	0
Alexander Wright, Dallas	21	514	24.5	t102	1
Charles Wilson, Green Bay	23	522	22.7	t82	1
Dexter Carter, San Francisco	37	839	22.7	t98	1
Deion Sanders, Atlanta	26	576	22.2	t100	1
Darrin Nelson, Minnesota	31	682	22.0	50	0
David Meggett, N.Y. Giants	25	514	20.6	42	0
Brian Mitchell, Washington	29	583	20.1	35	0
Vernon Turner, L.A. Rams	24	457	19.0	36	0
Gary Anderson, Tampa Bay	34	643	18.9	39	0

AFC LEADING INTERCEPTORS

	No	Yards	Long	TD
Ronnie Lott, L.A. Raiders	8	52	27	0
Cris Dishman, Houston	6	61	43	0
Gill Byrd, San Diego	6	48	22	0
Nate Odomes, Buffalo	5	120	48	1
Steve Atwater, Denver	5	104	49	0
Louis Oliver, Miami	5	80	37	0
Dennis Smith, Denver	5	60	39	0
Eugene Robinson, Seattle	5	56	27	0
Darryl Talley, Buffalo	5	45	13	0
Lionel Washington, L.A. Raiders	5	22	16	0

NFC LEADING INTERCEPTORS

	No	Yards	Long	TD
Ray Crockett, Detroit	6	141	t96	1
Deion Sanders, Atlanta	6	119	t55	1
Aeneas Williams, Phoenix	6	60	32	0
Tim McKyer, Atlanta	6	24	24	0
Gene Atkins, New Orleans	5	198	79	0
Joey Browner, Minnesota	5	97	45	0
Wilber Marshall, Washington	5	75	t54	1
Darrell Green, Washington	5	47	24	0
Tim McDonald, Phoenix	5	36	13	0
Wes Hopkins, Philadelphia	5	26	14	0
Eric Allen, Philadelphia	5	20	8	0
Vince Buck, New Orleans	5	12	12	0

3-21 Blast Off

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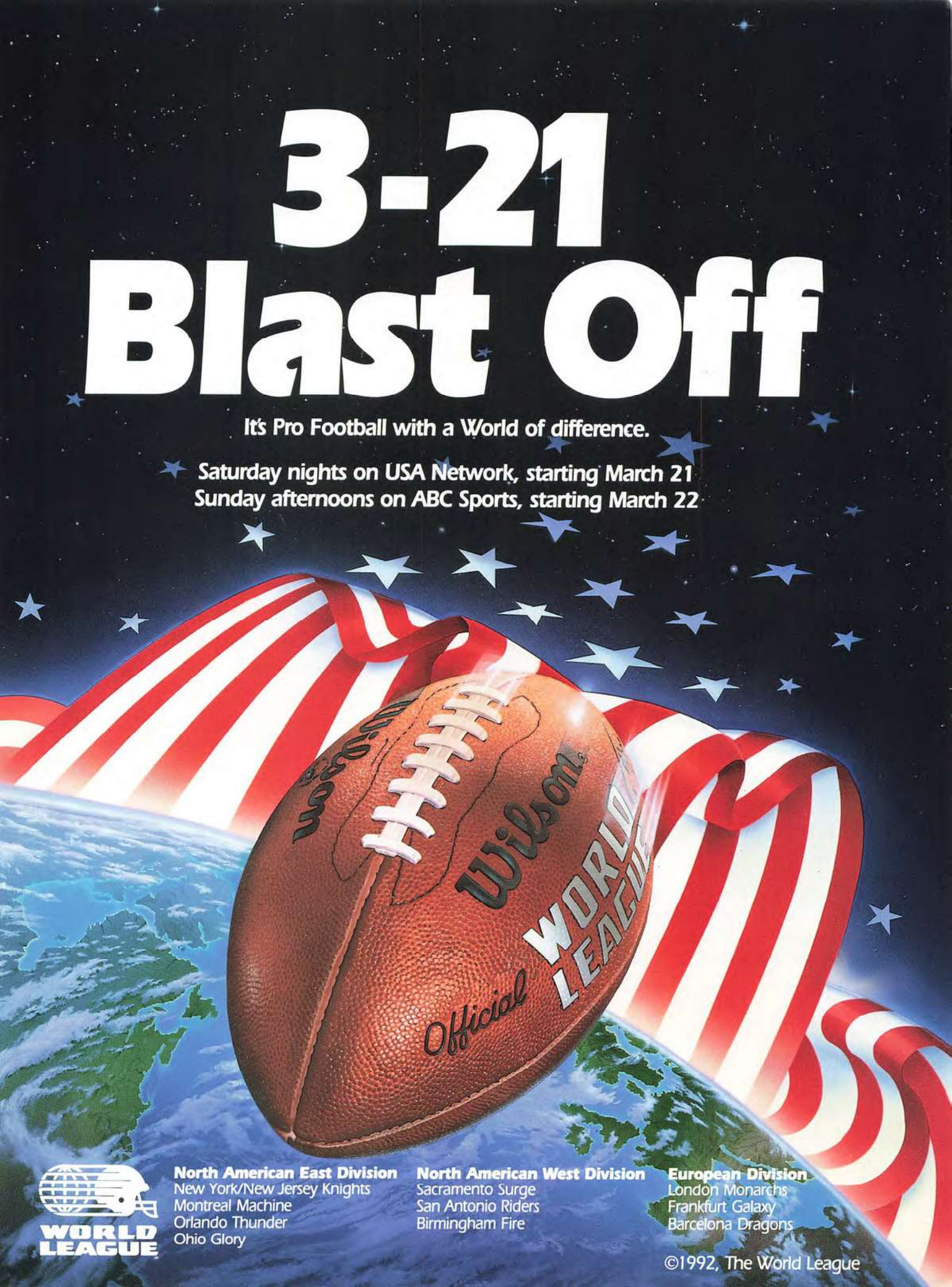

WORLD LEAGUE

North American East Division
New York/New Jersey Knights
Montreal Machine
Orlando Thunder
Ohio Glory

North American West Division
Sacramento Surge
San Antonio Riders
Birmingham Fire

European Division
London Monarchs
Frankfurt Galaxy
Barcelona Dragons

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AFC RESULTS AND STANDINGS

BUFFALO BILLS

Sept. 1	MIAMI	35-31
Sept. 8	PITTSBURGH	52-34
Sept. 15	at N.Y. Jets	23-20
Sept. 22	at Tampa Bay	17-10
Sept. 29	CHICAGO	35-20
Oct. 7	at Kansas City (Mon.)	6-33
Oct. 13	INDIANAPOLIS	42-6
Oct. 21	CINCINNATI (Mon.)	35-16
Oct. 27	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 3	NEW ENGLAND	22-17
Nov. 10	vs. Green Bay at Mil.	34-24
Nov. 18	at Miami (Mon.)	41-27
Nov. 24	at New England	13-16
Dec. 1	N.Y. JETS	24-13
Dec. 8	at L.A. Raiders*	30-27
Dec. 15	at Indianapolis (N)	35-7
Dec. 22	DETROIT*	14-17
W13 L3		**458-318**

CINCINNATI BENGALS

Sept. 1	at Denver	14-45
Sept. 8	HOUSTON (N)	7-30
Sept. 15	at Cleveland	13-14
Sept. 22	WASHINGTON	27-34
Sept. 29	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 6	SEATTLE	7-13
Oct. 13	at Dallas	23-35
Oct. 21	at Buffalo (Mon.)	16-35
Oct. 27	at Houston	3-35
Nov. 3	CLEVELAND	23-21
Nov. 10	PITTSBURGH*	27-33
Nov. 17	at Philadelphia	10-17
Nov. 24	L.A. RAIDERS	14-38
Dec. 1	N.Y. GIANTS	27-24
Dec. 9	at Miami (Mon.)	13-37
Dec. 15	at Pittsburgh	10-17
Dec. 22	NEW ENGLAND	29-7
W3 L13		**263-435**

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Sept. 1	DALLAS	14-26
Sept. 8	at New England	20-0
Sept. 15	CINCINNATI	14-13
Sept. 22	at N.Y. Giants	10-13
Sept. 29	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 6	N.Y. JETS	14-17
Oct. 13	at Washington	17-42
Oct. 20	at San Diego*	30-24
Oct. 27	PITTSBURGH	17-14
Nov. 3	at Cincinnati	21-23
Nov. 10	PHILADELPHIA	30-32
Nov. 17	at Houston (N)	24-28
Nov. 24	KANSAS CITY	20-15
Dec. 1	at Indianapolis	31-0
Dec. 8	DENVER	7-17
Dec. 15	HOUSTON	14-17
Dec. 22	at Pittsburgh	10-17
W6 L10		**293-298**

DENVER BRONCOS

Sept. 1	CINCINNATI	45-14
Sept. 8	at L.A. Raiders	13-16
Sept. 15	SEATTLE	16-10
Sept. 22	SAN DIEGO	27-19
Sept. 29	at Minnesota (N)	13-6
Oct. 6	at Houston	14-42
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 20	KANSAS CITY	19-16
Oct. 27	at New England	9-6
Nov. 3	PITTSBURGH (N)	20-13
Nov. 10	L.A. RAIDERS	16-17
Nov. 17	at Kansas City	24-20
Nov. 24	at Seattle	10-13
Dec. 1	NEW ENGLAND	20-3
Dec. 8	at Cleveland	17-7
Dec. 15	PHOENIX	24-19
Dec. 22	at San Diego	17-14
W12 L4		**304-235**

HOUSTON OILERS

Sept. 1	L.A. RAIDERS	47-17
Sept. 8	at Cincinnati (N)	30-7
Sept. 16	KANSAS CITY (Mon.)	17-7
Sept. 22	at New England	20-24
Sept. 29	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 6	DENVER	42-14
Oct. 13	at N.Y. Jets	23-20
Oct. 20	at Miami	17-13
Oct. 27	CINCINNATI	35-3
Nov. 3	at Washington*	13-16
Nov. 10	DALLAS*	26-23
Nov. 17	CLEVELAND (N)	28-24
Nov. 24	at Pittsburgh	14-26
Dec. 2	PHILADELPHIA (Mon.)	6-13
Dec. 8	PITTSBURGH	31-6
Dec. 15	at Cleveland	17-14
Dec. 21	at N.Y. Giants (Sat.)	20-24
W11 L5		**386-251**

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Sept. 1	NEW ENGLAND	7-16
Sept. 8	at Miami	6-17
Sept. 15	at L.A. Raiders	0-16
Sept. 22	DETROIT	24-33
Sept. 29	at Seattle	3-31
Oct. 6	PITTSBURGH (N)	3-21
Oct. 13	at Buffalo	6-42
Oct. 20	N.Y. JETS	6-17
Oct. 27	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 3	MIAMI	6-10
Nov. 10	at N.Y. Jets	28-27
Nov. 17	CHICAGO	17-31
Nov. 24	vs. Green Bay at Mil.	10-14
Dec. 1	CLEVELAND	0-31
Dec. 8	at New England*	17-23
Dec. 15	BUFFALO (N)	7-35
Dec. 22	at Tampa Bay	3-17
W1 L15		**143-381**

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Sept. 1	ATLANTA	14-3
Sept. 8	NEW ORLEANS	10-17
Sept. 16	at Houston (Mon.)	7-17
Sept. 22	SEATTLE	20-13
Sept. 29	at San Diego	14-13
Oct. 7	BUFFALO (Mon.)	33-6
Oct. 13	MIAMI	42-7
Oct. 20	at Denver	16-19
Oct. 28	L.A. RAIDERS (Mon.)	24-21
Nov. 3	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 10	at L.A. Rams	27-20
Nov. 17	DENVER	20-24
Nov. 24	at Cleveland	15-20
Dec. 1	at Seattle	19-6
Dec. 8	SAN DIEGO*	20-17
Dec. 14	at San Francisco (Sat.)	14-28
Dec. 22	at L.A Raiders	27-21
W10 L6		**322-252**

LOS ANGELES RAIDERS

Sept. 1	at Houston	17-47
Sept. 8	DENVER	16-13
Sept. 15	INDIANAPOLIS	16-0
Sept. 22	at Atlanta	17-21
Sept. 29	SAN FRANCISCO	12-6
Oct. 6	SAN DIEGO	13-21
Oct. 13	at Seattle* (N)	23-20
Oct. 20	L.A. RAMS	20-17
Oct. 28	at Kansas City (Mon.)	21-24
Nov. 3	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 10	at Denver	17-16
Nov. 17	SEATTLE	31-7
Nov. 24	at Cincinnati	38-14
Dec. 1	at San Diego (N)	9-7
Dec. 8	BUFFALO*	27-30
Dec. 16	at New Orleans (Mon.)	0-27
Dec. 22	KANSAS CITY	21-27
W9 L7		**298-297**

MIAMI DOLPHINS

Sept. 1	at Buffalo	31-35
Sept. 8	INDIANAPOLIS	17-6
Sept. 15	at Detroit	13-17
Sept. 22	GREEN BAY	16-13
Sept. 29	at N.Y. Jets	23-41
Oct. 6	at New England	20-10
Oct. 13	at Kansas City	7-42
Oct. 20	HOUSTON	13-17
Oct. 27	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 3	at Indianapolis	10-6
Nov. 10	NEW ENGLAND (N)	30-20
Nov. 18	BUFFALO (Mon.)	27-41
Nov. 24	at Chicago*	16-13
Dec. 1	TAMPA BAY	33-14
Dec. 9	CINCINNATI (Mon.)	37-13
Dec. 15	at San Diego	30-38
Dec. 22	N.Y. JETS*	20-23
W8 L8		**343-349**

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Sept. 1	at Indianapolis	16-7
Sept. 8	CLEVELAND	0-20
Sept. 15	at Pittsburgh	6-20
Sept. 22	HOUSTON	24-20
Sept. 29	at Phoenix	10-24
Oct. 6	MIAMI	10-20
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 20	MINNESOTA*	26-23
Oct. 27	DENVER	6-9
Nov. 3	at Buffalo	17-22
Nov. 10	at Miami (N)	20-30
Nov. 17	N.Y. JETS	21-28
Nov. 24	BUFFALO	16-13
Dec. 1	at Denver	3-20
Dec. 8	INDIANAPOLIS*	23-17
Dec. 15	at N.Y. Jets	6-3
Dec. 22	at Cincinnati	7-29
W6 L10		**211-305**

NEW YORK JETS

Sept. 1	TAMPA BAY	16-13
Sept. 8	at Seattle	13-20
Sept. 15	BUFFALO	20-23
Sept. 23	at Chicago (Mon.)*	13-19
Sept. 29	MIAMI	41-23
Oct. 6	at Cleveland	17-14
Oct. 13	HOUSTON	20-23
Oct. 20	at Indianapolis	17-6
Oct. 27	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 3	GREEN BAY*	19-16
Nov. 10	INDIANAPOLIS	27-28
Nov. 17	at New England	28-21
Nov. 24	SAN DIEGO	24-3
Dec. 1	at Buffalo	13-24
Dec. 8	at Detroit	20-34
Dec. 15	NEW ENGLAND	3-6
Dec. 22	at Miami*	23-20
W8 L8		**314-293**

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Sept. 1	SAN DIEGO	26-20
Sept. 8	at Buffalo	34-52
Sept. 15	NEW ENGLAND	20-6
Sept. 22	at Philadelphia	14-23
Sept. 29	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 6	at Indianapolis (N)	21-3
Oct. 14	N.Y. GIANTS (Mon.)	20-23
Oct. 20	SEATTLE	7-27
Oct. 27	at Cleveland	14-17
Nov. 3	at Denver (N)	13-20
Nov. 10	at Cincinnati*	33-27
Nov. 17	WASHINGTON	14-41
Nov. 24	HOUSTON	26-14
Nov. 28	at Dallas (Thanks.)	10-20
Dec. 8	at Houston	6-31
Dec. 15	CINCINNATI	17-10
Dec. 22	CLEVELAND	17-10
W7 L9		**292-344**

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Sept. 1	at Pittsburgh	20-26
Sept. 8	at San Francisco	14-34
Sept. 15	ATLANTA	10-13
Sept. 22	at Denver	19-27
Sept. 29	KANSAS CITY	13-14
Oct. 6	at L.A. Raiders	21-13
Oct. 13	at L.A. Rams	24-30
Oct. 20	CLEVELAND*	24-30
Oct. 27	at Seattle	9-20
Nov. 3	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 10	SEATTLE	17-14
Nov. 17	NEW ORLEANS	24-21
Nov. 24	at N.Y. Jets	3-24
Dec. 1	L.A. RAIDERS (N)	7-9
Dec. 8	at Kansas City*	17-20
Dec. 15	MIAMI	38-30
Dec. 22	DENVER	14-17
W4 L12		**274-342**

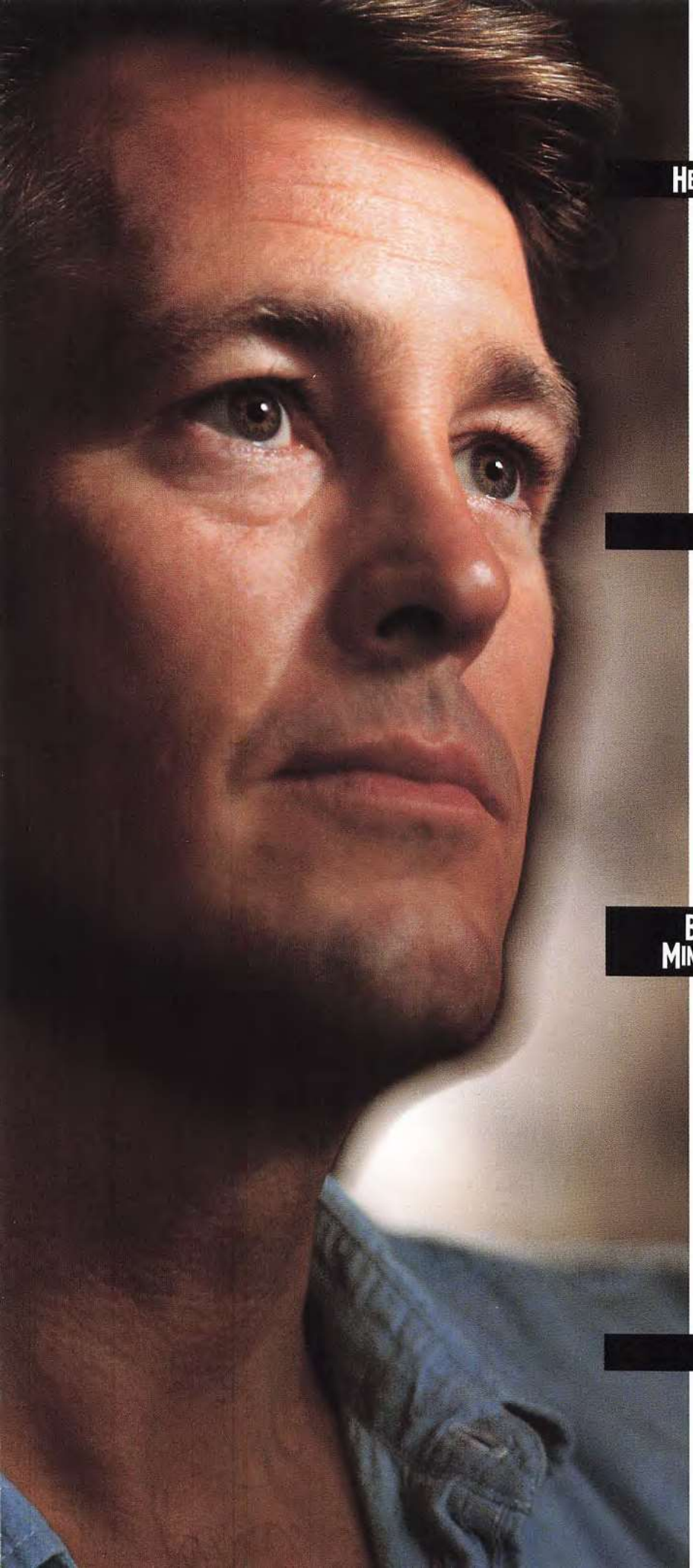
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Sept. 1	at New Orleans	24-27
Sept. 8	N.Y. JETS	20-13
Sept. 15	at Denver	10-16
Sept. 22	at Kansas City	13-20
Sept. 29	INDIANAPOLIS	51-3
Oct. 6	at Cincinnati	13-7
Oct. 13	L.A. RAIDERS* (N)	20-23
Oct. 20	at Pittsburgh	27-7
Oct. 27	SAN DIEGO	20-9
Nov. 3	OPEN DATE	
Nov. 10	at San Diego	14-17
Nov. 17	at L.A. Raiders	7-31
Nov. 24	DENVER	13-10
Dec. 1	KANSAS CITY	6-19
Dec. 8	SAN FRANCISCO	22-24
Dec. 15	at Atlanta	13-26
Dec. 22	L.A. RAMS (N)	23-9
W7 L9		**276-261**

1991 AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Buffalo	13	3	0	.813	458	318
N.Y. Jets	8	8	0	.500	314	293
Miami	8	8	0	.500	343	349
New England	6	10	0	.375	211	305
Indianapolis	1	15	0	.063	143	381
Central Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Houston	11	5	0	.688	386	251
Pittsburgh	7	9	0	.438	292	344
Cleveland	6	10	0	.375	293	298
Cincinnati	3	13	0	.188	263	435
Western Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Denver	12	4	0	.750	304	235
Kansas City	10	6	0	.625	322	252
L.A. Raiders	9	7	0	.563	298	297
Seattle	7	9	0	.438	276	261
San Diego	4	12	0	.250	274	342

*Overtime



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More Than Just The Score

NFC Results and Standings

ATLANTA FALCONS

Sept. 1	at Kansas City	3-14
Sept. 8	MINNESOTA	19-20
Sept. 15	at San Diego	13-10
Sept. 22	L.A. RAIDERS	21-17
Sept. 29	NEW ORLEANS	6-27
Oct. 6	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 13	at San Francisco	39-34
Oct. 20	at Phoenix	10-16
Oct. 27	L.A. RAMS	31-14
Nov. 3	SAN FRANCISCO	17-14
Nov. 10	at Washington	17-56
Nov. 17	TAMPA BAY	43-7
Nov. 24	at New Orleans (N)*	23-20
Dec. 1	GREEN BAY	35-31
Dec. 8	at L.A. Rams	31-14
Dec. 15	SEATTLE	26-13
Dec. 22	at Dallas	27-31
W10 L6		**361-338**

CHICAGO BEARS

Sept. 1	MINNESOTA	10-6
Sept. 8	at Tampa Bay	21-20
Sept. 15	N.Y. GIANTS	20-17
Sept. 23	N.Y. JETS (Mon.)*	19-13
Sept. 29	at Buffalo	20-35
Oct. 6	WASHINGTON	7-20
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 17	at Green Bay (Thurs.)	10-0
Oct. 27	at New Orleans	20-17
Nov. 3	DETROIT	20-10
Nov. 11	at Minnesota (Mon.)	34-17
Nov. 17	at Indianapolis	31-17
Nov. 24	MIAMI*	13-16
Nov. 28	at Detroit (Thanks.)	6-16
Dec. 8	GREEN BAY	27-13
Dec. 14	TAMPA BAY (Sat.)	27-0
Dec. 23	at San Francisco (Mon.)	14-52
W11 L5		**299-269**

DALLAS COWBOYS

Sept. 1	at Cleveland	26-14
Sept. 9	WASHINGTON (Mon.)	31-33
Sept. 15	PHILADELPHIA	0-24
Sept. 22	at Phoenix (N)	17-9
Sept. 29	N.Y. GIANTS	21-16
Oct. 6	vs. Green Bay at Mil	20-17
Oct. 13	CINCINNATI	35-23
Oct. 20	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 27	at Detroit	10-34
Nov. 3	PHOENIX	27-7
Nov. 10	at Houston*	23-26
Nov. 17	at N.Y. Giants	9-22
Nov. 24	at Washington	24-21
Nov. 28	PITTSBURGH (Thanks.)	20-10
Dec. 8	NEW ORLEANS	23-14
Dec. 15	at Philadelphia	25-13
Dec. 22	ATLANTA	31-27
W11 L5		**342-310**

DETROIT LIONS

Sept. 1	at Washington (N)	0-45
Sept. 8	GREEN BAY	23-14
Sept. 15	MIAMI	17-13
Sept. 22	at Indianapolis	33-24
Sept. 29	TAMPA BAY	31-3
Oct. 6	MINNESOTA	24-20
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 20	at San Francisco	3-35
Oct. 27	DALLAS	34-10
Nov. 3	at Chicago	10-20
Nov. 10	at Tampa Bay	21-30
Nov. 17	L.A. RAMS	21-10
Nov. 24	at Minnesota	34-14
Nov. 28	CHICAGO (Thanks.)	16-6
Dec. 8	N.Y. JETS	34-20
Dec. 15	at Green Bay	21-17
Dec. 22	at Buffalo*	17-14
W6 L10		**339-295**

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Sept. 1	PHILADELPHIA	3-20
Sept. 8	at Detroit	14-23
Sept. 15	TAMPA BAY	15-13
Sept. 22	at Miami	13-16
Sept. 29	at L.A. Rams	21-23
Oct. 6	DALLAS at Mil	17-20
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 17	CHICAGO (Thurs.)	0-10
Oct. 27	at Tampa Bay	27-0
Nov. 3	at N.Y. Jets*	16-19
Nov. 10	BUFFALO at Mil	24-34
Nov. 17	MINNESOTA	21-35
Nov. 24	INDIANAPOLIS at Mil	14-10
Dec. 1	at Atlanta	31-35
Dec. 8	at Chicago	13-27
Dec. 15	DETROIT	17-21
Dec. 21	at Minnesota (Sat.)	27-7
W4 L12		**273-313**

LOS ANGELES RAMS

Sept. 1	PHOENIX	14-24
Sept. 8	at N.Y. Giants	19-13
Sept. 15	at New Orleans (N)	7-24
Sept. 22	at San Francisco	10-27
Sept. 29	GREEN BAY	23-21
Oct. 6	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 13	SAN DIEGO	30-24
Oct. 20	at L.A. Raiders	17-20
Oct. 27	at Atlanta	14-31
Nov. 3	NEW ORLEANS	17-24
Nov. 10	KANSAS CITY	20-27
Nov. 17	at Detroit	10-21
Nov. 25	SAN FRANCISCO (Mon.)	10-33
Dec. 1	WASHINGTON	6-27
Dec. 8	ATLANTA	14-31
Dec. 15	at Minnesota	14-20
Dec. 22	at Seattle (N)	9-23
W3 L13		**234-390**

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Sept. 1	at Chicago	6-10
Sept. 8	at Atlanta	20-19
Sept. 15	SAN FRANCISCO	17-14
Sept. 22	at New Orleans	0-26
Sept. 29	DENVER (N)	6-13
Oct. 6	at Detroit	20-24
Oct. 13	PHOENIX	34-7
Oct. 20	at New England*	23-26
Oct. 27	at Phoenix	28-0
Nov. 3	TAMPA BAY	28-13
Nov. 11	CHICAGO (Mon.)	17-34
Nov. 17	at Green Bay	35-21
Nov. 24	DETROIT	14-34
Dec. 1	OPEN DATE	
Dec. 8	at Tampa Bay (N)	26-14
Dec. 15	L.A. RAMS	20-14
Dec. 21	GREEN BAY (Sat.)	7-27
W8 L8		**301-306**

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Sept. 1	SEATTLE	27-24
Sept. 8	at Kansas City	17-10
Sept. 15	L.A. RAMS (N)	24-7
Sept. 22	MINNESOTA	26-0
Sept. 29	at Atlanta	27-6
Oct. 6	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 13	at Philadelphia	13-6
Oct. 20	TAMPA BAY	23-7
Oct. 27	CHICAGO	17-10
Nov. 3	at L.A. Rams	24-17
Nov. 10	SAN FRANCISCO	10-3
Nov. 17	at San Diego	21-24
Nov. 24	ATLANTA (N)*	20-23
Dec. 1	at San Francisco	24-38
Dec. 8	at Dallas	14-23
Dec. 16	L.A. RAIDERS (Mon.)	27-0
Dec. 22	at Phoenix	27-3
W11 L5		**341-211**

NEW YORK GIANTS

Sept. 2	SAN FRANCISCO (Mon.)	16-14
Sept. 8	L.A. RAMS	13-19
Sept. 15	at Chicago	17-20
Sept. 22	CLEVELAND	13-10
Sept. 29	at Dallas	16-21
Oct. 6	PHOENIX	20-9
Oct. 14	at Pittsburgh (Mon.)	23-20
Oct. 20	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 27	WASHINGTON (N)	13-17
Nov. 4	at Philadelphia (Mon.)	7-30
Nov. 10	at Phoenix	21-14
Nov. 17	DALLAS	22-9
Nov. 24	at Tampa Bay	21-14
Dec. 1	at Cincinnati	24-27
Dec. 8	PHILADELPHIA	14-19
Dec. 15	at Washington	17-34
Dec. 21	HOUSTON (Sat.)	24-20
W8 L8		**281-297**

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Sept. 1	at Green Bay	20-3
Sept. 8	PHOENIX	10-26
Sept. 15	at Dallas	24-0
Sept. 22	PITTSBURGH	23-14
Sept. 30	at Washington (Mon.)	0-23
Oct. 6	at Tampa Bay	13-14
Oct. 13	NEW ORLEANS	6-13
Oct. 20	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 27	SAN FRANCISCO	7-23
Nov. 4	N.Y. GIANTS (Mon.)	30-7
Nov. 10	at Cleveland	32-30
Nov. 17	CINCINNATI	17-10
Nov. 24	at Phoenix	34-14
Dec. 2	at Houston (Mon.)	13-6
Dec. 8	at N.Y. Giants	19-14
Dec. 15	DALLAS	13-25
Dec. 22	WASHINGTON	24-22
W10 L6		**285-244**

PHOENIX CARDINALS

Sept. 1	at L.A. Rams	24-14
Sept. 8	at Philadelphia	26-10
Sept. 15	at Washington	0-34
Sept. 22	DALLAS (N)	9-17
Sept. 29	NEW ENGLAND	24-10
Oct. 6	at N.Y. Giants	9-20
Oct. 13	at Minnesota	7-34
Oct. 20	ATLANTA	16-10
Oct. 27	MINNESOTA	0-28
Nov. 3	at Dallas	7-27
Nov. 10	N.Y. GIANTS	14-21
Nov. 17	at San Francisco	10-14
Nov. 24	PHILADELPHIA	14-34
Dec. 1	OPEN DATE	
Dec. 8	WASHINGTON	14-20
Dec. 15	at Denver	19-24
Dec. 22	NEW ORLEANS	3-27
W4 L12		**196-344**

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Sept. 2	at N.Y. Giants (Mon.)	14-16
Sept. 8	SAN DIEGO	34-14
Sept. 15	at Minnesota	14-17
Sept. 22	L.A. RAMS	27-10
Sept. 29	at L.A. Raiders	6-12
Oct. 6	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 13	ATLANTA	34-39
Oct. 20	DETROIT	35-3
Oct. 27	at Philadelphia	23-7
Nov. 3	at Atlanta	14-17
Nov. 10	at New Orleans	3-10
Nov. 17	PHOENIX	14-10
Nov. 25	at L.A. Rams (Mon.)	33-10
Dec. 1	NEW ORLEANS	38-24
Dec. 8	at Seattle	24-22
Dec. 14	KANSAS CITY (Sat.)	28-14
Dec. 23	CHICAGO (Mon.)	52-14
W10 L6		**393-239**

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Sept. 1	at N.Y. Jets	13-16
Sept. 8	CHICAGO	20-21
Sept. 15	at Green Bay	13-15
Sept. 22	BUFFALO	10-17
Sept. 29	at Detroit	3-31
Oct. 6	PHILADELPHIA	14-13
Oct. 13	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 20	at New Orleans	7-23
Oct. 27	GREEN BAY	0-27
Nov. 3	at Minnesota	13-28
Nov. 10	DETROIT	30-21
Nov. 17	at Atlanta	7-43
Nov. 24	N.Y. GIANTS	14-21
Dec. 1	at Miami	14-33
Dec. 8	MINNESOTA (N)	24-26
Dec. 14	at Chicago (Sat.)	0-27
Dec. 22	INDIANAPOLIS	17-3
W3 L13		**199-365**

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Sept. 1	DETROIT (N)	45-0
Sept. 9	at Dallas (Mon.)	33-31
Sept. 15	PHOENIX	34-0
Sept. 22	at Cincinnati	34-27
Sept. 30	PHILADELPHIA (Mon.)	23-0
Oct. 6	at Chicago	20-7
Oct. 13	CLEVELAND	42-17
Oct. 20	OPEN DATE	
Oct. 27	at N.Y. Giants (N)	17-13
Nov. 3	HOUSTON*	16-13
Nov. 10	ATLANTA	56-17
Nov. 17	at Pittsburgh	41-14
Nov. 24	DALLAS	21-24
Dec. 1	at L.A. Rams	27-6
Dec. 8	at Phoenix	20-14
Dec. 15	N.Y. GIANTS	34-17
Dec. 22	at Philadelphia	22-24
W14 L2		**485-224**

1991 NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Washington	14	2	0	.875	485	224
Dallas	11	5	0	.688	342	310
Philadelphia	10	6	0	.625	285	244
N.Y. Giants	8	8	0	.500	281	297
Phoenix	4	12	0	.250	196	344
Central Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
Detroit	12	4	0	.750	339	295
Chicago	11	5	0	.688	299	269
Minnesota	8	8	0	.500	301	306
Green Bay	4	12	0	.250	273	313
Tampa Bay	3	13	0	.188	199	365
Western Division	**W**	**L**	**T**	**Pct.**	**Pts.**	**OP**
New Orleans	11	5	0	.688	341	211
Atlanta	10	6	0	.625	361	338
San Francisco	10	6	0	.625	393	239
L.A. Rams	3	13	0	.188	234	390

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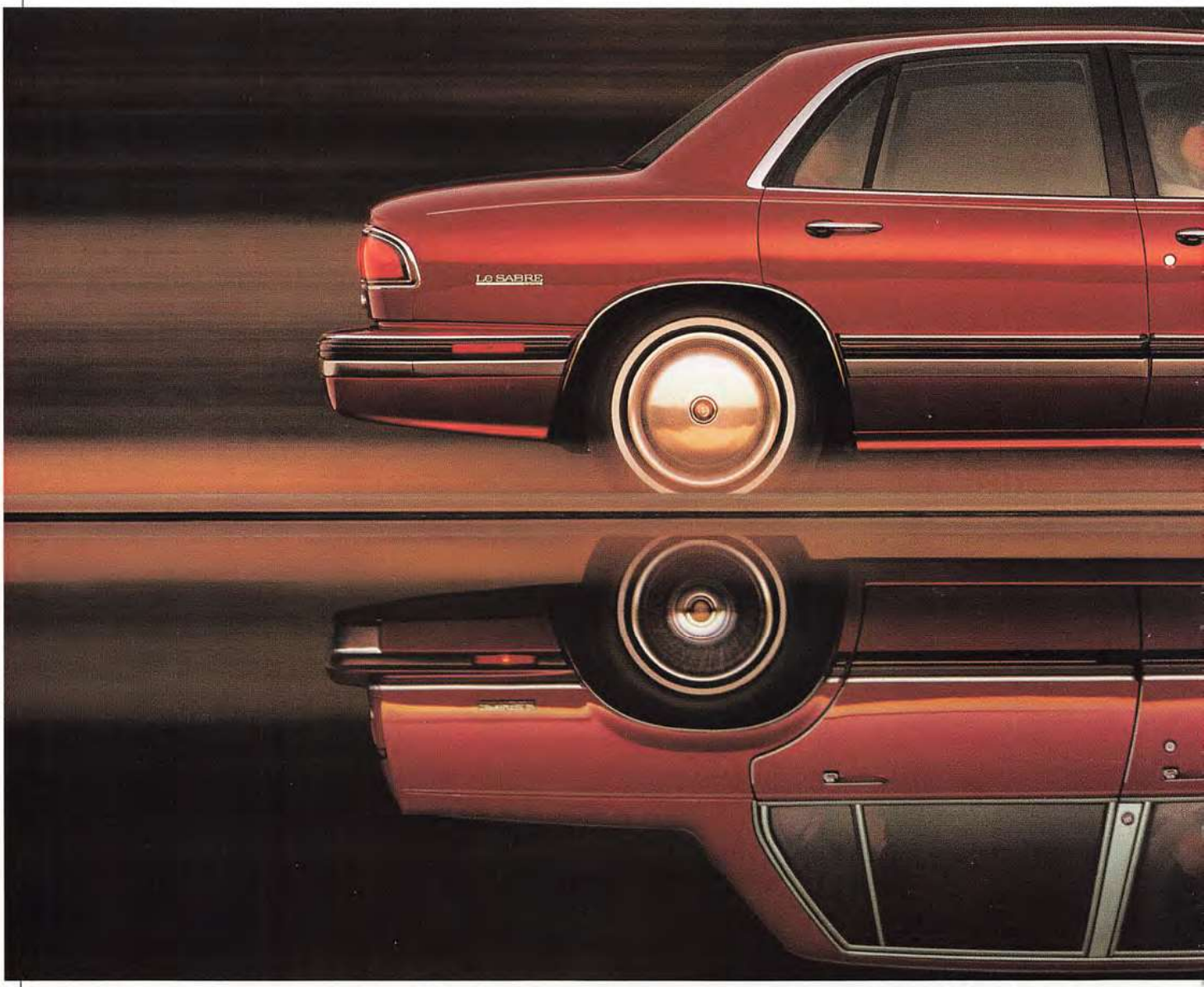

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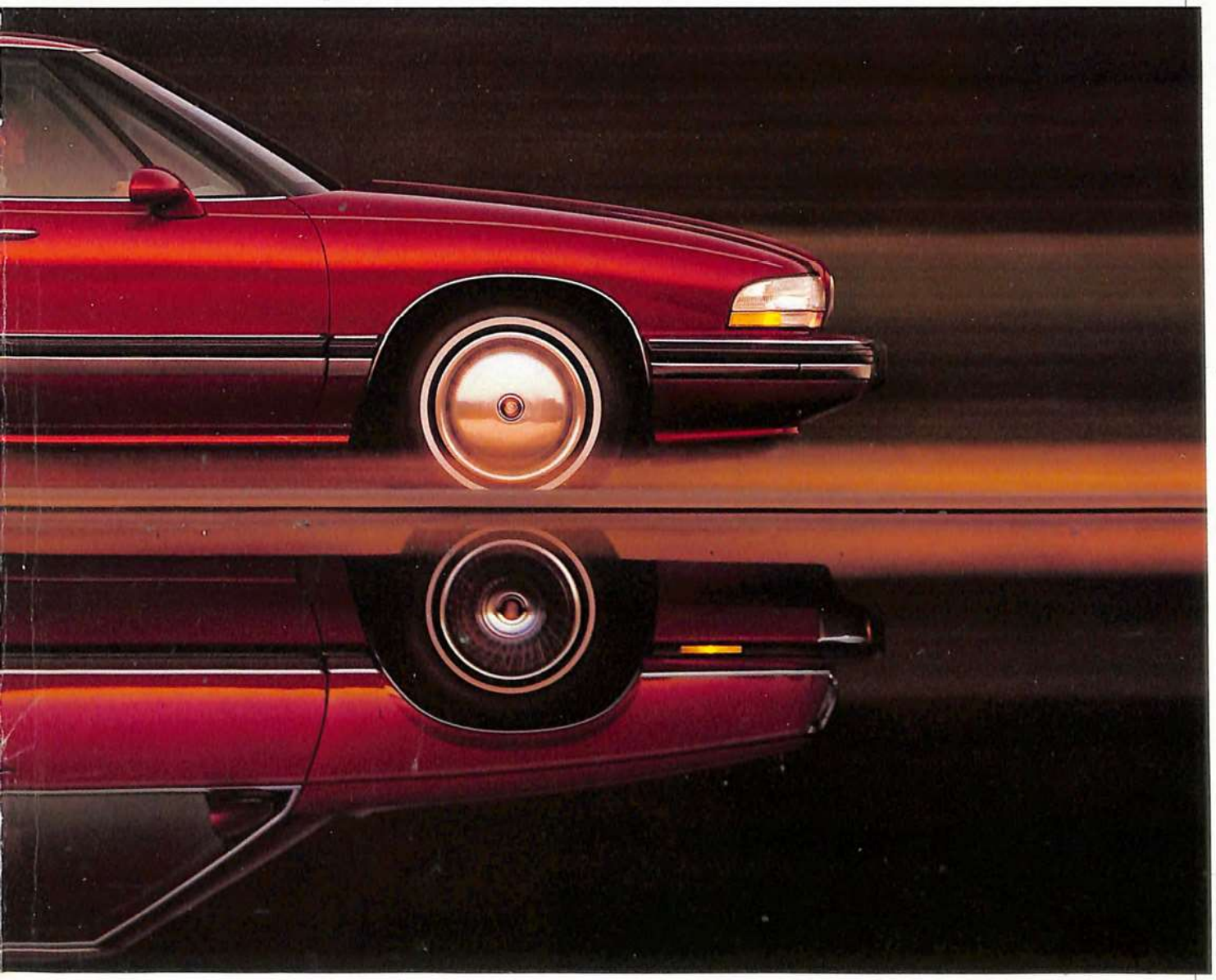

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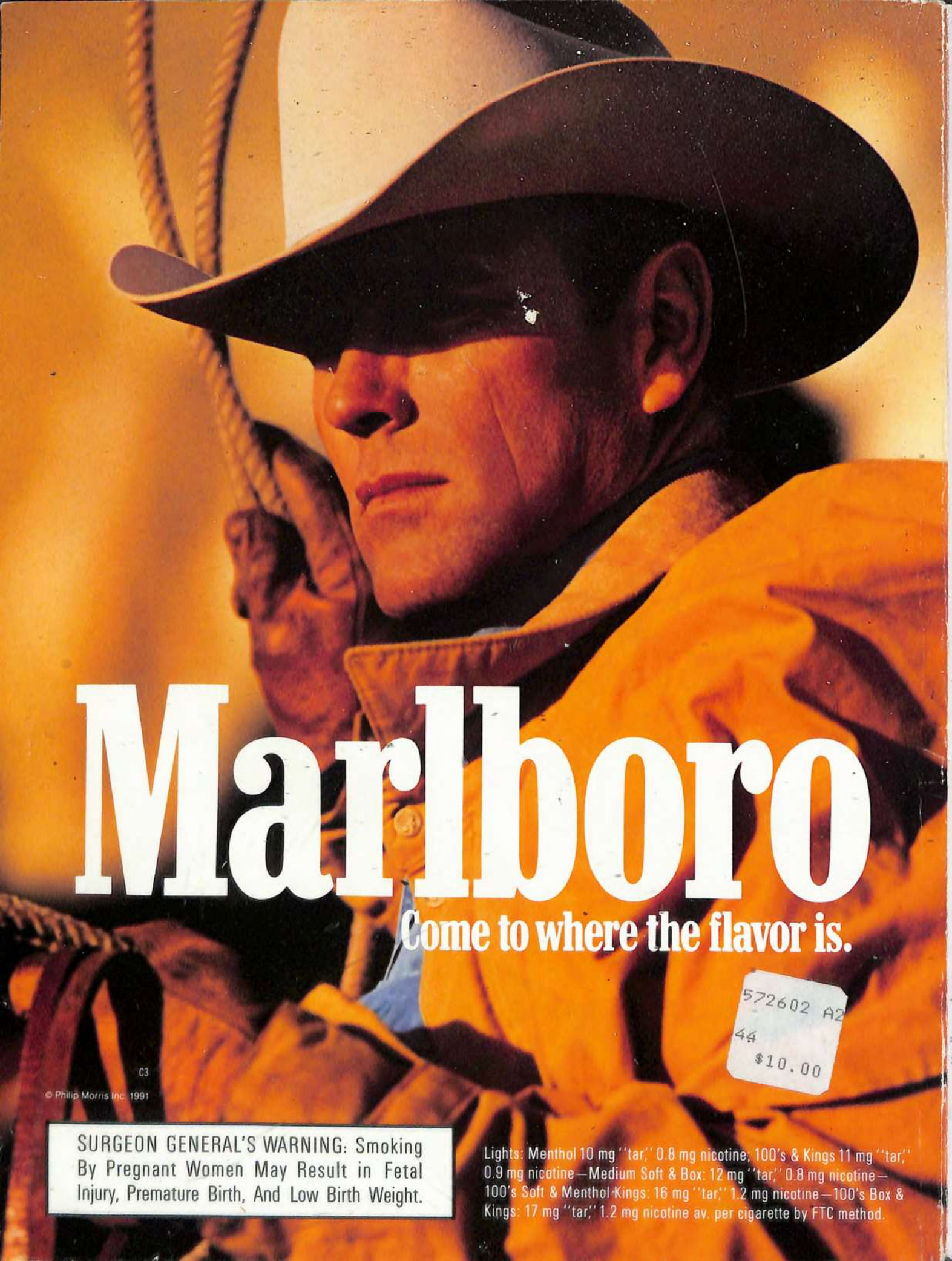
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